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THE CHRONOLOGY

OF

CHAUCER'S WRITINGS.

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BY

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BERLIN.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

§ 1. INTRODUCTORY 1
§ 2. THE DATE OF CHAUCER'S BIRTH, AB. 1340 ... 2

First Period. A.D. 1366-72.

§ 3. HIS EARLIEST POETRY: "DEETH OF BLAUNCHE," &c. 4
§ 4. HIS "A B C" 6
§ 5. HIS "COMPLEYNT TO PITE," ? AFTER 1372 ... 7
§ 6. THE "ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE" NOT CHAUCER'S 7
§ 7. THE DOUBTFUL RYMES IN THE "ROMAUNT" ... 10
§ 8. THE DATE OF CHAUCER'S LOST "ROMAUNCE OF THE ROSE" 12
§ 9. LIMITS OF CHAUCER'S FIRST PERIOD (1366-72). ITALIAN INFLUENCE 15

Second Period. A.D. 1373-80.

§ 10. EARLIEST WORKS OF HIS SECOND PERIOD (1373-9) 16
§ 11. CHAUCER'S MARRIAGE, PROBABLY IN 1374 ... 17
(Thomas Chaucer and Gascoigne, Notes, p. 18-20.)
§ 12. CHAUCER'S "COMPLEYNTS" AND AMOROUS POETRY 20
§ 13. "THE LIFE OF SAINT CECILE" 27
§ 14. "THE WRECCHED ENGENDRYNGE OF MANKYNDE" 28
§ 15. ASTRONOMY, "BOECE," "PALAMON AND ARCITAS" 29
§ 16. "THE COMPLEYNT OF MARS," A.D. 1379 ... 30

Third Period. A.D. 1380-92.

§ 17. TRAVELS ABROAD. STUDY OF ASTRONOMY AND LATIN AUTHORS. CHANGE OF TONE ... 33
§ 18. BOCCACCIO'S "FILOSTRATO." CHAUCER'S "TROILUS" AND "ADAM SCRIVEYN" 35
§ 19. MORAL GOWER 36
§ 20. "THE PARLAMENT OF FOULES," A.D. 1382 ... 37
§ 21. THE RELATION OF THE "PARLAMENT" TO "TROILUS" 38

PAGE

§ 22. "MERCILES BEAUTE," "NEW-FANGELNESSE," "ROSAMOUNDE" 40
§ 23. "THE HOUS OF FAME," A.D. 1383-4 42
§ 24. "THE LEGENDE OF GOOD WOMEN," A.D. 1384-5 43
§ 25. "ANELIDA AND ARCITE," A.D. 1387 ... 46
§ 26. ATTEMPTS AT FIXING THE DATE OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES" 48
§ 27. CHAUCER'S POSITION IN HIS LATER YEARS ... 50
§ 28. INTERNAL REASONS FOR THE DATE OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES" 52
§ 29. THE PROBABLE ORDER OF "THE CANTERBURY TALES" 54
§ 30. THE FIRST GROUP OF TALES 55
§ 31. THE SECOND GROUP OF TALES 57
§ 32. THE THIRD GROUP OF TALES 60
§ 33. THE FOURTH AND FIFTH GROUPS OF TALES ... 61
§ 34. THE LAST GROUPS, VI. AND VII. DURATION OF THE PILGRIMAGE 62
§ 35. THE ASTRONOMICAL ALLUSION IN THE PARSON'S PROLOGUE 64
§ 36. THE PRESUMABLE DATE OF THE PILGRIMAGE, 18-20 APRIL 1385 66
§ 37. THE PRESUMABLE DATES OF THE SINGLE TALES 67
§ 38. THE "ASTROLABE" 69

Fourth Period, A.D. 1393–1400.

§ 39. "ENVOYS TO SCOGAN AND BUKTON," "COMPLEYNT OF VENUS," "PURSE" 70
§ 40. "FORTUNE," "FORMER AGE," "STEDFASTNESSE," "GENTILESSE," "TRUTH" (p. 77) 74
§ 41. PROVERBS, CONCLUSION 78

TABLE OF THE DATES OF CHAUCER'S WORKS 78

APPENDIX.

PROF. B. TEN BRINK'S LATEST VIEWS ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF SOME OF CHAUCER'S WRITINGS 81

NOTES BY PROFESSOR SKEAT 87

THE CHRONOLOGY OF CHAUCER'S WRITINGS.

BY DR. JOHN KOCH, OF BERLIN.

§ 1. *Introductory.*—Though, when attentively reading Chaucer's writings, we find at certain places (of which more hereafter) some allusions to their chronological order, and though several documents have been discovered, from which we can gather some information about our poet's life, there still remain a good many gaps which every Chaucer student would be glad to fill up.[1] And, indeed, attempts enough have been made to supply these wants, either by ingeniously connecting some biographical incidents with certain lines in his works, or by taking into account the general character, the language or versification, of a poem. Among recent researches in this direction, I will mention Professor ten Brink's 'Geschichte [illegible] Literatur,' vol. ii.; in Professor [illegible]

from each other, a new examination into the question of the chronology of Chaucer's works will not be without interest, even if the results of it do not prove final ones.

§ 2. *The date of Chaucer's birth.*—The first thing we shall have to inquire about is the date of the poet's birth, to ascertain which as exactly as possible is so far of importance for our purpose, as the date of composition of certain poems of his, which contain allusions to his age, depends upon this ascertainment.

Of course the year 1328, as the date of Chaucer's first appearance in this "vale of tears," has been entirely dropped, as no proof whatever is to be found for it; and this the more so, because an entry on the Coram Rege Roll, discovered by Mr. W. Rye,[1] shows that our poet's father was then under 14 years of age. Besides, there is another well-known document extant, according to which Chaucer was "forty years and upwards" in the year 1386, so that his birth must have taken place about 1340. And, indeed, this date, first suggested by Hertzberg, I think, has been adopted as the probably right one by Mr. Bond, Prof. ten Brink, Dr. Furnivall, and others. Only Mr. H. Morley won't believe it, as he thinks Chaucer must have been mistaken [illegible] people, as certain documents [illegible] have [illegible] about their ages! That [illegible] to prove that Chaucer did [illegible] many [illegible] poet's [illegible] make [illegible] ment of [illegible]

ven if the above statement should seem too
to base the date of Chaucer's birth upon, there
known facts in his life which serve as evidence
ne direction. There is, first, another assertion
at in 1386 he had borne arms for twenty-seven
Now it is not very likely that a young man of
would begin his military career as late as near
ieth year of his age. Further, it appears from
sehold Accounts of the Countess of Ulster,'[1]
-69, that Chaucer must have held the post of a
rvant in her household, as the payments and
given to him are very much smaller than those
older people in the Countess's retinue. And
we find him in 1367-69 as the King's
d Valet of the Chamber,[2] this position would
er agree with a young man of about twenty-
irty than with a man of nearly forty.
e circumstances taken together are, in my
ool sufficient that Chaucer must have been
t the year 1340, maybe in 1339 or in 1341,
ly not much earlier or later.
s only one objection of some substance to be
inst this date, but one that Mr. H. Morley does
uch stress upon, viz., that Chaucer in some of
'Skogan' and 'Venus'), which cannot be later
(see below, § 39), complains of his old age,[3]
prives him of his former delight in writing
d makes rhyming hard work to him. More-
ower, in the Dedication of his first cast of the
io Amantis,' which was most likely composed in
admonishes his friend to write, "*in his daies*

[1] hauc. Soc., 2nd Series 21, p. 102.
[2] hauc. Soc., 2nd Series 14.
[3] r. Furnivall's Trial-Forewords, p. 8.
e Dissertation of Karl Meyer, 'John Gower's beziehungen
' p. 38.

old," in his "*later age*," his 'Testament of Love,' which—so far as we know—no traces are left. born about 1340, Chaucer would then have been than fifty-two or fifty-three; and, certainly, thi great an age as to deprive a man of genius of hi faculties. But looking a little more closely meaning of those lines,[1] we shall find that it i real infirmity of old age that Chaucer is compl but that despondency and dullness of spirit wh feels who, after a life full of activity and earn sees himself debarred from intercourse with friends and neglected by his former patrons; that all his exertions have been frustrated, all disappointed; who, after the loss of a sufficie is, in his riper years, obliged to contend with ships of life, perhaps exposed to poverty:[2] n indeed, that playful and amorous poetry can afford him consolation, and that he now is, ever, attracted by moral reflections.[3] Beside is not so much complaining, in those lines, of hi to write poetry, as to translate verbatim a Fr with a number of hard rhymes. So we see objection cannot be regarded as strong enoug the probability of the above date of Chaucer's

§ 3. *Chaucer's earliest Poetry.* '*Deeth of* '*Maudeleyne*.'—If we turn now to the first p literary productions, we must take as starting-

[1] Skog., l. 45: *I am dul as deed | Forgete in solitar nesse*; Venus l. 76 *seqq.*

[2] See Trial-Forewords, p. 8 and 26 *seqq.*

[3] It is scarcely worth while refuting Mr. H. Morley's st that l. 995 in the 'Hous of Fame' alludes to Chaucer's old man as early as in 1383-84—the probable date of th For, as Prof. ten Brink in his 'Studien,' p. 154, rightly a man of some forty years may very well think (or preten himself too old to learn a new science, without being pursue his poetical inclinations.

of which can be fixed with sufficient certainty. The earliest poem alluding to an historical event is his 'Deeth of Blaunche,' written in commemoration of the death of John of Gaunt's wife, which took place on Sept. 12, 1369.[1] Though this work does not come up to the merits of his later compositions, and shows several defects in its construction, and especially in its very lame conclusion (for which Dr. Furnivall would like to have had the poet caned),[2] no one can deny that in it language and verse are skilfully handled, and that it contains enough of pathos and originality—in spite of some borrowings from French poets,—of freshness and pretty descriptions,[3] to make it more than probable that the 'Deeth of Blaunche' was not Chaucer's first attempt in poetry. But if so, which were its forerunners?

Now before deciding this question, we shall first have to answer another, Which of the poet's writings must certainly be reckoned among his earliest compositions? Looking into the poet's own list in the Prologue of the 'Legende of Good Women' (ll. 417—430), we only find one piece marked as one of his youthful productions,[4] 'Origines upon the Maudeleyne,' which, however, has not come down to us, so that we are entirely restricted to the 'Deeth of Blaunche' to find out the characteristics of Chaucer's first period. Here we see that he takes not only case and metre, but whole passages from French poets (the 'Roman de la Rose' and 'Machault'),[5] but much less directly from Latin authors (Ovid), whom he generally follows after his French sources. But there are no traces to be discovered of the influence of the great Italian

[1] See Trial-Forewords, p. 19; ten Brink, Studien, p. 3 *seqq.*

[2] See Trial-Forewords, p. 42.

[3] See ten Brink, *l. c.* p. 6; Trial-Forewords, p. 42.

[4] "*Origines upon a goode while*," l. 427.

[5] See ten Brink, *l. c.* p. 7 *seqq.*; Trial-Forewords, p. 43 *seqq.*; M. Lange's Dissertation on Chaucer's Boke of the Duchesse,

poets—Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio—who afterwards became his chief models; nor any of his thorough study of Latin authors, which appears more in his later productions; nor any of his racy and playful humour.

§ 4. *The 'A B C.'*—It will appear most likely that those pieces which show the same symptoms belong to the same period of Chaucer's literary career. But there are only few among his poems known to be genuine in which those characteristics are to be found. First we have the so-called 'A B C,' a free translation from the French of Guillaume de Deguilleville's 'Pèlerinage de la vie humaine.'[1] Though no masterpiece of our poet's, it no doubt shows some skill in the transformation of the short-line stanzas of the original into the five-accent metre, and in the liberties the author is obliged to take on account of the difficulty of beginning each stanza with a new letter according to the order of the alphabet, so that the 'A B C' certainly cannot be considered as the first attempt of a young poet. But, on the other hand, there is no sufficient reason to assign it to the second period, as Prof. ten Brink has lately done,[2] merely because it somewhat resembles, in its religious tenor, the 'Life of St. Cecily,' in which the influence of Italian poetry is clearly seen.[3] Why should all devotional poetry of an author be ascribed to one certain part of his life only? Surely no one doubts that the 'Prioress's Tale' and the 'Parson's' belong to Chaucer's later productions, without insisting that they must have been written in the very same year? So I think the 'A B C' may be fairly reckoned among the poems of Chaucer's first period, even though I won't lay much stress upon Speght's remark,[4] in his edition of 1602, who reports that the poem was made at

[1] See Trial-Forewords, pp. 13 and 100.
[2] Geschichte der engl. Literatur, II, 62.
[3] See ten Brink, Studien, p. 131.
[4] See Trial-Forewords, p. 13.

the request of Blaunche of Lancaster, as we do not know his authority for this information. But in opposition to other Chaucer students who date the 'A B C' about 1366-67,[1] I feel inclined to put it close before, or even after, the 'Deeth of Blaunche,' for its wording, rhyme, and versification show an experienced hand, not at all inferior, if not superior, to the one that wrote the last-named piece.

§ 5. *Pité.*—There is a third poem generally classed among Chaucer's early productions: 'The Compleynt unto Pité,' which Dr. Furnivall[2] thinks was probably written about 1367. The same date is assumed by Prof. Schipper and Prof. Skeat,[3] whilst Prof. ten Brink[4] puts it between 1370-72. There can be no doubt that this Complaint refers to the poet's own hopeless love, and that it must have been written before his marriage. Likewise it must be admitted that the expression of a hapless lover's feelings is somewhat marred by the confusion of its allegory, so that, at the same time taking into consideration the absence of any influence of the Italians, this poem seems very well to suit the general character of Chaucer's first period. Still, there are some reasons, which I shall explain afterwards, that make it more likely that the 'Compleynt unto Pité' was composed after the year 1372.

§ 6. '*The Romaunt of the Rose.*'—So it appears that none of Chaucer's earliest poetical attempts have come down to us. But there is one work extant which has long been held a work of his youth, if not his very first: the translation of the 'Romaunt of the Rose.' The only known MS. of a Mid.-Eng. fragmentary version of this

[1] Dr. Furnivall in Trial-Forewords, p. 19; Prof. Skeat in Minor Poems, p. xlvii.
[2] Trial-Forewords, pp. 18 and 31.
[3] Englische Metrik, I, p. 427; Minor Poems, p. lvi.
[4] Gesch. d. engl. Literatur, II, 149.

French allegorical poem, however, containing a great number of non-Chaucerian rhymes and words which, as Skeat has pointed out,[1] this text of the 'Romaunt' was for some time entirely struck out from the list of our poet's genuine works. But lately several attempts have been made to restore this fragment to Chaucer as the real author. So Dr. W. Fick, of Kiel, in spite of Prof. Skeat's objections, tried to show[2] that the impurity of rhyme may be accounted for by the awkwardness of a youthful beginner, and that the dialectical sounds and forms may be due to the prevalence of Northern English literature in the former half of the fourteenth century. Then Dr. Lindner proposed to prove[3] that the M.E. version of the 'Romaunt,' etc. consists of two different parts (A, lines 1—5813, B, l. 5814 to the end), written by two different hands, the former of which he is inclined to attribute to Chaucer. After this, a letter appeared in the *Academy* (July 1890), announcing that Dr. Kaluza, of Kœnigsberg, had made the discovery that Fragment A is also divided into parts, and that he hoped to prove that about the first 1700 lines were really Chaucer's. And lastly, Prof. Skeat, in a 'Postscript on the Romaunt of the Rose,'[4] admitting the possibility of this suggestion, tried to rectify the false rhymes in this first part of Fragment A, and found that only very few cases remained requiring great alterations of the text as preserved in the unique Glasgow MS.

[1] See his Letter to the Academy, Aug. 10th, 18[illegible] edition of the Prioress's Tale, Clarendon Press, p. xxxi; Chaucer Soc., 2nd Series, 19, pp. 439 *seqq.*; and cf. Anglia I, [illegible] Brink's Chaucer's Sprache und Verskunst, where he omits the Romaunt of the Rose entirely.

[2] See Englische Studien, IX, pp. 161 *seqq.* and 506.

[3] Engl. Stud. XI, pp. 163-73.

[4] See the Chaucer Society's Rime-Index to the M[illegible] Poems, pp. x, *seqq.*

But as the results of Dr. Koch's further researches have not been published yet, and as I could not leave this question in the same undecided state in my present papers, I have ventured upon an examination of the text of the 'Romaunt' myself. Not wishing, however, to forestall Dr. Koch, I will only give a few remarks on the subject, hoping that he will soon favour us with a detailed investigation of the genuineness of this poem.

To begin with, I have to state my conviction that a poet may now and then, in his youthful attempts, make use of dialectical words and rhymes which he later on entirely avoids, but never in so great number[1] as we find in the Glasgow MS. in the last 5000 lines, especially when, as is the case with Chaucer, his great characteristics are the purity and elegance of his language and versification, from which he, even in his other early works, only occasionally deviates.[2] And supposing for a moment the whole of the text of the M.-E. 'Rose' to be Chaucer's, this translation—lacking in poetical originality as it is—could not be the work of a mere boy, who would scarcely be able to understand and to appreciate the subtleties of the lengthy French original, far less to English it in a manner—so far as a literal translation can go—on the whole so satisfactory. For, comparing the wording and rhyme in the 'Death of Blaunche' with the same in the 'Rose,' there appears such difference that one would hardly believe a young poet could have so much improved in the course of two or three years; and, assuming that both works are by the same person, one would naturally feel inclined to put an interval of several, say eight or ten years, between the two. But

[1] It will be sufficient to refer the reader to Prof. Skeat's list, *l.c.* Germans may compare the rhymes in Schiller's earliest poetry. But even in his later poems his rhymes are not always pure. See, *e.g.*, Death of Blanche, ll. 73-74, the rhyme of *telles* and *elles*, or ll. 261-2, *folke* and *helpe*.

[2]

as a lad of eighteen or nineteen I should not think Chaucer capable even of this translation, especially when we consider that, as a junior servant, or as a young soldier in King Edward's army, he is not very likely to have found leisure enough to undertake so laborious a task. Besides, it ought to be borne in mind that just the beginning 1700 lines are the purest in rhyme. So I quite agree with Prof. Skeat that only this first portion can come into consideration in a discussion of the genuineness of the 'Romaunt of the Rose.'

§ 7. *The doubtful rhymes in the 'Rose.'*—Now turning to its doubtful rhymes, Prof. Skeat has easily removed most of them by showing that they are mere errors of the scribe. Still there are several that look suspicious, which he has left unnoticed, or not quite done away with. I do not reckon among them the one occurring in l. 567 (*mirrour : tresour*) which he is rather uneasy about, (thinking that *tresour* ought to be *tressure*), for the corresponding rhymes in the French original [1] are *miroer*, *tresoer*. And I will also admit that his conjecture in ll. 1341-43 [2] may be right, which he proposes to alter into :

> "If so be that he *wolde* (hadde) me shete (shet).
> For, if I with his arwe mete,
> It *wold* (hadde) me greven (greved) sore, i-wis,"

because the French text has (l. 1324 sq.) *traie* (for *wolde shete*) and *grèvera* (for *wolde greven*).

Very doubtful, however, remain ll. 505-6, which run in the Glasgow MS. :

> "Thassemble (God kepe it fro *care!*)
> Of briddis, whiche therynne *ware.*"

Prof. Skeat suggests reading *fare* for *ware*, but upon what authority? On the contrary, the French text has, in its corresponding line, *estoient* (*l. c.* p. 17). Besides,

[1] I quote from the Edition of Francisque Michel, p. 44.
[2] See Morris's Aldine Edition, vol. V.

it ought to be noticed that rhymes of the same character occur in the second portion of Fragment A as well as in Fragment B, so ll. 1857-8, *thare* (there) : *to-share ;* ll. 5460-1, *bare* (bare, devoid) : *ware* (were) ; ll. 5780-1, *were* (for *ware*) : *forfare.* L. 887, Prof. Skeat alters *preyse* into *pryse*, in order to make it rhyme with *devise.* But in his genuine works Chaucer has always *preyse*(d) rhyming with *reyse*(d),[1] while a rhyme similar to the first-named occurs in the second portion of Fragment A, *servise* : *preise* (ll. 4961-2). Further instances of non-Chaucerian rhymes, apparently overlooked by Prof. Skeat, are,—*Macrobes* : *lees* (ll. 7-8), whilst in 'Blaunche,' ll. 283-4, Chaucer rhymes, *us* : *Macrobeus ; gay* : *hay*(e), ll. 53-4 ; similarly, *hay*(e) : *may*, ll. 2987-8, *assay* : *hay*(e), ll. 3449-50, whilst our poet's usual word [for a hedge] is *hawe* or *hegge*[2] ; *gardyn* : *theryn*, ll. 481-2 (cp. ll. 511-12 *engyn* : *gardyn*, ll. 601-2 *gardyn Alexandryn* [?], ll. 699-700 and ll. 1279-80 *gardyn* : *in*, ll. 1380-1 *fyn* : *gardyn*, a rhyme which never occurs in one of Chaucer's genuine poems) ; *journé* : *she*, ll. 579-80 (whereas the usual form of the former word is *iourney*, rhyming with *way*, Clerk's T., Six-Text, 428, 781), etc.

Each of these cases may not be of much consequence by itself, but all taken together give pretty strong evidence against the genuineness even of this first portion, especially when we notice that some of those doubtful rhymes occur again in those parts of the 'Romaunt of the Rose' which are supposed not to be Chaucer's. So far the rhyme. But what about the metre, which Prof. Skeat has not taken into consideration at all? Now, though I do not regard it as my task to correct all the

[1] See C. T., 353, l. 705 ; L. G. W., l. 1524 ; and Troilus, II, l. 1583.

[2] See Prof. Skeat's Essay on Chaucer, p. 446, and Ryme-Index to the C. T., p. 72. Troilus, III, l. 351, the word has two syllables, *hay-e*.

lines in the 'Romaunt of the Rose' which have not the right number of syllables or accents according to Chaucer's usage, yet I want to point out a number of verses which, as they are given in the Glasgow MS., do not speak much in favour of the genuineness of the first 1700 lines either. Of course there are several among them in which the surplus syllables can easily be removed, or the wanting ones supplied[1]; still there remain a good many where it appears very doubtful whether we have to deal with the scribe's error or with the author's carelessness or indifference to smoothness of verse. Such are the following lines: 124, 163, 196, 677, 865, 923, 1147, 1304, 1326, 1348, 1587, etc.

On the whole, then, I do not believe unless Dr. Kaluza succeeds in strengthening his point that the text in question can be considered as Chaucer's. Still we have evidence enough[2] to know for certain that he did write a translation of the 'Romaunce of the Rose,' which apparently is lost. The question naturally arises, In what period of his life was he most likely to undertake this work?

§ 8. *The Date of Chaucer's 'Rose.'*—The general idea, of course greatly influenced by the supposition that the Glasgow text is our poet's, was for some time that the 'Romaunt of the Rose' is one of his earliest works. But lately Professor ten Brink expressed his opinion[3] that this translation was written about the same time as Chaucer's 'Troilus and Criseyde,' *i. e.* about the year

[1] As for instance—l. 142, omit *the* before *peynturcs*; l. 310, read *yelw'* for *yolare*; l. 546, omit *is*; l. 567, add *in hond* behind *hadde* (cf. *en main* in the French text); l. 749, omit *in song*; l. 932, omit *ful*; l. 1146, omit *for*; l. 1150, read *set* for *setteth*; l. 1348, omit *in* (cf. l. 1447); l. 1474, omit *that*; l. 1496, omit *that he*, etc.

[2] See Legende of Good Women, the Prologue, ll. 329 and 441, and *Lydgate*, as quoted by Sir Harris Nicolas, in Morris's edition, p. 80.

[3] Gesch. d. engl. Literatur, II, p. 78 and 99.

1380. As for his reasons, the learned professor refers his readers to an Appendix, which, however, has not hitherto appeared.[1] So we must, for the present, content ourselves with his rather vague remarks in the passage just quoted. He thinks that the Glasgow Fragment could never have been written by Chaucer; that his own translation, probably suggested by his lascivious patron, John of Gaunt, was not composed until he himself had begun to think of love in a more ironical and cynical way, especially as he mentions this work of his in connection with his 'Troilus,' a poem much of the same style; and consequently that his 'Rose' must have been a free adaptation rather than a literal rendering of the French original.

Now, of course, it is a risky thing to discuss the character of a poetical work which we do not possess; still, if I rightly understand the few hints Chaucer himself has dropped about his 'Rose,' I hope to show that an early date of this translation is more probable.

For, first, it is certain that Chaucer must have thoroughly studied the 'Roman de la Rose' when he wrote his 'Deeth of Blaunche,' as in it he has made ample use of the said French poem.

Furthermore, he himself says, in the Prologue of 'The Lægende of Good Women' (l. 329), that he has translated the French 'Roman'

"in pleyn text, withouten nede of glose,"

which implies, though not directly meant in that way, that his rendering was a literal one, or nearly so, which would far better suit the character of a youthful production than one made in his riper years. Then, it ought to be noticed that the connection between the 'Romaunt' and 'Troilus' in the Prologue of the

[1] And perhaps never will, as some time after writing the above lines the news of Prof. ten Brink's untimely death caused the regret of all English philologists.—See, however, my Appendix, p. 80.

'Legend' regards only the similarity of their character, and need not at all allude to their having been composed about the same period of our poet's literary career.

And finally, when we compare the number and size of works which, from internal evidence, must be attributed to Chaucer's second period (1373—about 1380), as I shall afterwards specify, with those of his early years, we shall see that, considering at the same time the poet's repeated travels to the continent, they ('Cecily,' 'Palamon and Arcite,' 'Troilus,' 'Boece,' 'Mars,' 'Parlament,' etc.) would quite fill up the leisure hours of a man who had besides to look to the duties of a laborious office, whilst no more than two poems ('Blaunche' and 'A B C') can, with any certainty, be placed in the time up to Chaucer's thirty-second year. As these can scarcely be considered as the first productions of a young poet (see above, § 3), we must suppose that Chaucer had tried his skill before in a more literal translation; and his Englishing of the 'Roman de la Rose' would be exactly the work we should expect to have been written about this time. Now, as a young man of twenty-five or thereabouts, who was most earnestly in love himself, and whose faith in womankind was apparently not yet shaken, he would have been attracted, not so much by the satirical character of the French original, as by the fact that it was then the great work of fashion, the chief source for refined sentiments and the elegant language of lovers; if indeed he did not—which is not at all unlikely—undertake the translation at the request or order of some high-born person, perhaps Prince Lionel or John of Gaunt. Whether Chaucer finished off the whole of this vast poem at once, or whether he ever finished it at all, must remain doubtful: it is even not impossible that he interrupted his work when he had done Guillaume de Lorris's part, and that he resumed its more ironical second portion in

his later years, about the time in which Prof. ten Brink wishes to place the whole of his translation, when he (Chaucer) had begun to share Jean de Meun's satirical view of the female character. But not to go too far with mere suppositions, I only wish to draw the reader's attention to the similarity of the relations between Chaucer's probably early 'Rose' and his poetry in the period of his 'Troilus,' with those between his more or less literal translation of Boece and the 'Ballades' of his older age ('Truth,' 'Fortune,' etc.), when he had felt, by experience, the truth of the Latin author's philosophy.

§ 9. *The limits of Chaucer's First Period. Italian influence.*—The next question we have to decide upon is, How far does the first period of Chaucer's literary life extend? According to Prof. ten Brink's view,[1] which has since been adopted by Dr. Furnivall,[2] Prof. Ward,[3] and Prof. Skeat,[4] it is from his first Italian journey (Nov. 1372—Nov. 1373) that our poet's second period is to be dated. This is clearly shown by the influence of the great Italian authors upon Chaucer's works, by his borrowings and imitations from them, and it is rather strange to see that Mr. H. Morley[5] has lately tried to invalidate the grounds on which the above view is based. He thinks that Chaucer was appointed a member of the Commission sent to Genoa because he already possessed some knowledge of the Italian language, which he had also shown in his poetical works. It is evident that Mr. Morley's argument tends only to strengthen his supposition that Chaucer's 'Parlament of Foules' was composed as early as 1359 for the celebration of John of Gaunt's wedding;

[1] Studien, etc, p. 38.
[2] Trial-Forewords, p. 6.
[3] Chaucer, by A. W. Ward, p. 74.
[4] Legende of Good Women, p. viii.
[5] English Writers, V, p. 156 *seqq.* and 187 *seqq.*

and it is for this same reason, as we have seen before (§ 2), that he places our poet's birth about the year 1332. But he has no proof of any value to offer for assuming so early a date; on the contrary, every bit of internal evidence speaks in favour of a much later period.[1] It will therefore be sufficient to remark here that, though Chaucer may have picked up some Italian before his journey in 1372, it is very unlikely that he was before then so thorough a master of that language as to be able to understand and to translate, so well as he has done, poetry of such difficulty as that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. For the literary intercourse between different countries was in those days in no wise so lively and regular as at present; and it certainly cannot be proved that any of the works of these old Italian authors were known in England before the year 1372. And as for the presumable reason why Chaucer was chosen to be sent to Italy on that occasion, it need not at all have been because he was acquainted with the language of that country,—for it is well known that in the Middle Ages the chief international language was Latin, and next to it, French—but because he had proved himself a man fit for foreign transactions before,[2] and because he possessed a good knowledge of both those languages, which appears even from his earliest works. And so I hope I have entirely done away with Mr. H. Morley's objections against the general view that our poet's first Italian journey is to be considered as a new starting-point in his literary career.

§ 10. *The earliest works of his Second Period.*—Which, however, of Chaucer's poems belonging to his second period are we to place first in order? There are some,

[1] See my Essay, Chaucer Society, 2nd Series, No. 18, p. 400 *seqq.*; Ward's Chaucer, p. 86 *seqq.*, and below, § 20.

[2] In 1370; see Trial-Forewords, p. 19.

as we shall see afterwards, containing allusions to historical personages or events, so that more or less certain dates can be assigned to them. But all these are between 1379 and 1383. Without any clue of that kind are the 'Life of St. Cecily,'—later on, as is well known, embodied into the Canterbury Tales;—'Palamon and Arcite,' of whose original shape only a few stanzas are preserved; and some love-poems, part of which at any rate have the appearance of being based upon personal experience. In order to see whether any foundation for this supposition can be found, we must examine what little biographical information about our poet, with regard to the time in question, we possess.

§ 11. *Chaucer's Marriage.*—We know[1] that Chaucer's wife, Philippa, had been a damsel in the household of Queen Philippa; but she is not mentioned as his wife expressly before June 13, 1374, whilst a Philippa Chaucer appears as "una Domicellarum," etc., as early as 1366. Sir Harris Nicolas[2] is therefore of opinion that the poet must have been married in the last-named year, whereas Dr. Furnivall,[3] whose opinion is followed by Prof. Ward,[4] Prof. ten Brink,[5] and others, thinks that the marriage did not take place till 1374, which year would very well coincide with Chaucer's appointment as Comptroller, on June 8. For, from what other reason would a man of talents in the prime of youth leave a court with which he is well connected, and where he is well credited, and seek employment so prosaic, unless he wishes to begin a quiet, domestic life? It is not quite impossible that Chaucer may have been married before that year; but what attractions could the state of wed-

[1] See Trial-Forewords, p. 18.
[2] Sir H. Nicolas, p. 46 (Morris, I.).
[3] Trial-Forewords, p. 31.
[4] Chaucer, p. 53.
[5] Gesch. d. engl. Literatur, II, p. 63.

lock offer to a valet or squire, if we read in King Edward II's Household and Wardrobe Ordinances[1] that those young men had constantly to attend upon his Majesty, and were not allowed to keep their wives at court or following the court? Besides, no reader of the 'Deeth of Blaunche' (written towards the end of 1369) can find any allusion to its author having been a lately-married man at that time.[2] If he had been one, he would certainly not have sighed over some hopeless passion (l. 35 *seqq.*), and would certainly have used more pathetic words when pitying the duke's loss of his wife (l. 1310). So I think everything points to the year 1374 as the most likely one of Chaucer's marriage.[3]

[1] Chauc. Soc., 2nd Series 14, pp. 18 and 56.

[2] See the passages quoted before.

[3] One objection might be raised against this date of our poet's marriage: the supposition that Thomas, the chief butler to Richard II and Henry IV, who afterwards represented Oxfordshire several times in Parliament (see Sir Harris Nicolas's Life, ed. Morris, p. 86 *seqq.*), was his son. But, if so, he would have been appointed to the first-named office before he was twenty-four years old, which, considering the importance of this position (see Edward II's Household and Wardrobe Ordinances, ed. Furnivall, p. 27 *seqq.*), would be very unlikely, especially as he was not a nobleman's son. Apparently not much later (Sir Harris assigns no date to the former statement), on the 20th March, 1399, the king gave Thomas Chaucer an annuity of twenty marks, which had been granted to him before by the Duke of Lancaster, a sum which Geoffrey Chaucer did not receive till he was twenty-seven at least. The date of Thomas's marriage to Matilda, second daughter of Sir John Burghersh, need not be so much taken into consideration here, as it may have taken place as late as 1403, though an earlier date is more probable.

Besides, it ought to be noticed that our poet, in all his writings, never alludes to this supposed son of his, whilst he several times finds an occasion to drop—not very pleasant—hints at his married life (see Ward's Chaucer, p. 84 *seqq.*), and dedicates his treatise on the Astrolabe, in tender and fatherly terms, to his son Louis, who, about 1391, was only ten years old. Furthermore, if Thomas Chaucer was so much in favour at court, and, perhaps, was married to so wealthy an heiress as Matilda Burghersh, at a time when Geoffrey was in sore distress for money (see Trial-Forewords, p. 27), it would have been a gross violation of his filial duty not to have

But what has the chronology of Chaucer's writings to do with his young wife and baby? Well, I should imagine that the first time of married life, even of a poet,

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helped his (supposed) father. Or, on the other hand, as Geoffrey apparently was in disgrace, it would be somewhat astonishing that his son should have held so good an appointment at court. So all internal reasons speak against this Thomas having been the poet's son.

But now, a few years ago (see *Athenæum*, No. 3153), Prof. John W. Hales brought forward the startling statement that Thomas, according to a note in Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary, was in reality Geoffrey Chaucer's son. As Gascoigne was a younger contemporary of Thomas, and was several times Chancellor of the University of Oxford, near which town Thomas had residences and was buried (at Ewelme, in 1434), he probably had known the latter personally. But it does not appear that Gascoigne was ever on intimate terms with Thomas, so that the above information about his relationship may be only based upon hearsay. He seems not to be much more accurate in his intelligence about Geoffrey Chaucer, whom he makes frequently before his death repent of his worldly writings; and though some truth may be in this statement (see the Retractation of the Parson's Tale), it sounds somewhat exaggerated; at any rate it is going rather too far to put our poet, as Gascoigne does, on the same line with Judas. Still, it can scarcely be doubted that Thomas was some relation of Geoffrey's, perhaps a nephew, or second cousin; for the name of Chaucer occurs frequently enough in documents of the fourteenth century (see Sir Harris Nicolas, *l. c.* pp. 93-4, and Trial-Forewords, p. 134 *seqq.*) to account for such being the case. There is, *e.g.*, a Henry Chaucer, a vintner, who was a married man, as early as 1372, who would do very well for a father of Thomas, as the appointment of the latter to be chief butler to the king was probably owing to his father's calling. Though Geoffrey's father was in the same trade, it does not so easily follow that his (supposed) son was also. And as for the Thomas Chaucer who held (in 1416-17) the post of forester at North Petherton (see Life-Records, etc., p. 118 *seqq.*), some eighteen years after Geoffrey, there is no certain proof that he must have been the son of the latter. It is even not quite certain that this Thomas Chaucer was the same person as the above-mentioned butler to the king, who about the time in question seems to have been abroad in the king's service (Sir H. Nicolas, *l. c.* p. 89). Well, all these suppositions and objections cannot of course be considered as strict arguments against Prof. Hales's conception of the case; still, they will be sufficient, I think, to show that Gascoigne's statement is not quite so reliable as it looks at the first glance. For, if Thomas was really Geoffrey the poet's son, the marriage of the last-named must

would most naturally appear as that period in which he would feel least inclined to write poems about unrequited love, &c., speaking his personal feelings. If in the course of time, however, his marriage turns out an unhappy one, as we have every reason to believe was the case with Chaucer's, the fact that he begins to sigh again for some other beauty would not appear quite so astonishing, if, morally speaking, deplorable. But then we should scarcely expect him to sing in the same strain as before. As he now cannot hope ever to possess the object of his adoration, perhaps his love-poems would, more or less, adopt an ironical tone.

§ 12. *Chaucer's 'Compleynts' and Amorous Poetry.*— But to return from generalizations to facts. We have several amorous poems of Chaucer's, called 'Complaints,' some of which decidedly refer to the woe of other personages, as the 'Complaint of Mars,' that of 'Venus,' that of 'Queen Anelida,' and which, therefore, may have been composed at any time of his life. Others, however, bear a more personal character; those are the well-known 'Compleynt to Pité' (of which I have already spoken), and some ascribed to our poet by Prof. Skeat in his edition of the 'Minor Poems,' viz., 'A Compleint to His Lady' (p. 213), 'An Amorous Compleint' (p. 218), and 'A Balade of Compleynt' (p. 222). It now therefore becomes a question whether all these three are to be considered as genuine.

As for the first, there can now, I think, be scarcely a

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have taken place before 1374, for which otherwise plausible reasons cannot, as far as I know, be adduced; or Thomas Chaucer must have been an illegitimate child of Philippa, Geoffrey's wife (Mr. Edward Walford's opinion; see *Athenæum*, l.c.). But until better proofs are found for this unpleasant supposition, I prefer to believe Philippa an honourable woman, and Chaucer's moral standing too high for him to have disgraced himself by marrying the cast-off mistress of some great personage at court, even if that person were the poet's patron, John of Gaunt.

doubt that it is Chaucer's own work. For besides the copy contained in the Harleian MS. No. 78,[1] another has been lately published by Dr. Furnivall in his 'More Odd Texts' (p. 46 *seqq.*),[2] bearing the name of Chaucer (dan Chaucer l'autour).[3] And if some critical reader should not think this evidence conclusive, as both copies, showing in several places the same mistakes, are apparently derived from the same source (Shirley), he will certainly be convinced of the genuineness of this poem by Prof. Skeat's comment on this subject,[4] who points out that scarcely any one else but Chaucer could, about that time, have written that part of it which is composed of an imitation of Dante's terza-rima (ll. 16—40), and that several lines bear a close resemblance to some occurring in the poet's 'Pité,' 'Anelida,' 'Parlament of Foules,' etc.

More doubtful does it appear whether the 'Amorous Complaint' may be ascribed to Chaucer. Dr. Furnivall will not acknowledge it as genuine,[5] and I myself have uttered some suspicions in my review of Prof. Skeat's edition.[6] But since then the second copy of the former poem has been published, and as both complaints resemble each other very much in character, the latter having also several passages parallel to such in genuine works, as shown by Prof. Skeat,[7] I am now inclined to admit that the 'Amorous Complaint' may really belong to our poet, though none of its MSS. claim it directly for him.

As for the 'Balade of Compleynt,' however, I have not altered my opinion, there not being any further proof for its genuineness save its style and expression.

[1] See Odd Texts, Appendix, pp. ii, v.
[2] See also *Academy*, No. 897, p. 24, i., from Phillipps MS. 9053.
[3] So I read for the unintelligible signature, "*lancvire.*"
[4] Minor Poems, p. lxxxi, and p. 398 *seqq.*
[5] More Odd Texts, p. 6.
[6] Englische Studien, xv, p. 418. [7] *L. c.*, p. 401 *seqq.*

Turning now to a closer examination of those two Complaints, we shall see that the former consists of two different parts, both containing the same general idea, but each having a different wording and metre. This can be shown by a short synopsis of each :—

A. 1st stanza (*seven-line*) :—I am sleepless for woe, nothing but death can relieve me.

2nd st. (same metre) :—I weep and wail all night and all day.

3rd st. (*terza-rima*) :—It is Love that causes my pain ; but she whom I love has no pity upon me.

4th st. (same metre) :—Her name is Kindness and Beauty, but her surname is the Fair one without mercy. I love her (though I have no part in her love) better than all the treasures of the world, and I will serve my "sweet foe" for ever.

B. (all written in *ten-line stanzas*) :—

1st stanza :—Woe is me that ever I was born, for all that I desire I have not, and of all that I do not desire I have plenty. But she who could help me will not take pity.

2nd st. (imperfect) :—I am sleepless with sorrow, and all this for your sake ; but your heart seems to be made of steel.

3rd st. :—Why do you behave so cruelly towards me, my best beloved foe? Be not angry, for I will serve you, though I am the unworthiest of all your servants.

4th st. :—But perhaps I am too uncunning and too awkward to show you how much I should like to fulfil your every wish.

5th st. :—I have loved and revered you for many years ; but I do not ask for more than that you allow me to continue in your service ; for you stand much too high for me to expect that you should ever love me again.

6th st.:—Though I have so very little chance ever to "thrive" in my love, you shall never drive me from your service; for I will always be true and faithful to you.

7th st.:—The more I love you, the less you love me; where, then, is your pity and gentleness?

8th st.:—If you ever find a truer servant than I am, then I will forgive you for my death; but if not, why will you ruin me, whose only guilt is his good-will?

To this the Phillipps MS. adds a ninth final stanza:—

But whether I live or die, my only wish is to do everything to please you, and I would rather die than do anything that might offend you; therefore grant me some drop of comfort.

If we compare these two poems with each other, we see at once that both are variations of the same theme. The poet is sleepless from the pain caused by unrequited love; but notwithstanding that his lady shows no mercy, he will serve her for ever, etc. The second, however, has some additional stanzas expressing his feelings of unworthiness, etc. But neither is complete: in the former some transitional lines in the terza-rima stanzas are wanting, as well with regard to rhyme as to sense; in the latter, the second stanza is left unfinished, two lines, interrupting the regular construction, being omitted, though the sense seems to be all right. But whether those omissions are due to the author's having left these poems in an unfinished state, or to a scribe's carelessness, cannot now be decided with absolute certainty. Yet considering the disorder in the train of thought in the B-portion; the constant repetition of the poet's assertion that he will for ever be a true servant to his lady; the contradiction occurring in the fifth stanza, where he says that he is much too humble to hope to be loved again, compared with the seventh stanza, where he complains that his lady will not return his love; and lastly the faulty rhyme in the first stanza

(I *mis* instead of I *missé*)—it seems more likely to me that Chaucer himself, not satisfied with this composition, gave up the final revision of this 'Compleynt,' and did not wish to have it published.

But before drawing any further conclusions from these two poems, let us examine the 'Amorous Compleynt' in the same way. It is entirely written in the well-known seven-line stanza.

1st stanza :—I, the most sorrowful man in the world, wish to complain of her, who has the power of my life and death, but will show no mercy.

2nd st. :—Alas, you laugh when I sigh : such is the reward of my constant love.

3rd st. :—It is impossible to describe your beauty ; you stand in too high a position for me, the unworthiest of all, to expect any mercy of you.

4th st. :—So I have no other hope but death (the sense of the last lines of this stanza is not quite plain, the MSS. being apparently spoilt).

5th st. :—Thus I die in despair ; but I must forgive you my death, as I serve you against your will.

6th st. :—I myself am the cause of my death ; so I must not blame her for it ; two things make me die, her beauty and my eyes.

7th st. :—She is the root of my disease and death, which she might remedy with one word ; but why does she take pleasure in my woe ?

8th st. :—She is the most perfect creature in my opinion ; why is there no pity in her ?

9th st. :—But I must not blame her, for Nature made her so that she laughs when she sees that men sigh.

10th st :—Could I but show you how much I suffer, and induce you to read this complaint, which I hope contains nothing that could displease you !

11th st. :—For nothing would grieve me more than to

have offended you; so, lady, forgive your true servant this complaint.

12th st.:—I shall ever faithfully serve you, my beginning and my end, my sun, and shall never repent of my love!

13th st.:—This Complaint[1] I make on St. Valentine's Day to her who until now has shown no mercy upon me; still I will continue to love and serve her, though she cause my death.

In my opinion this poem, though no masterpiece, reads, on the whole, better than the two former ones, and looks more finished, having no apparent gaps, though some corruptions in the text, as it is handed down to us by the MSS. Harl. 7333, Fairfax 16, and Bodleian 638.

In what relation do these three Complaints stand to each other? Their contents are so similar that they must apply to the same case: the poet's love for a high-born lady who does not return his passion, but laughs at his woe. But which of them is the first as to date? I should think the one beginning with two seven-line stanzas, perhaps a reproduction of Boccaccio's ottava-rima, then turning to Dante's terza-rima. Chaucer evidently attempted to express his feelings in a new metre, but not succeeding well in his imitation of Dante's verse, he made a fresh start: the artificial ten-line stanza (rhyming *aab aab cddc*) resembling in its construction those used later in parts of his 'Mars' (*aab aab bcc*) and 'Anelida' (*aab aab bab*). Yet, not satisfied again, either with his versification or with the arrangement and expression of his ideas, the poet made a third attempt, now producing the 'Amorous Compleint,' written throughout in seven-line stanzas, the metre which he afterwards handled with so much

[1] Surely l. 88, compared with l. 85, cannot be right, as in both the word *compleynt* occurs.

skill. This poem he indeed seems to have sent to his lady-love (see l. 67); but, alas, his hopes were disappointed, and his love's-labours lost. And now he breaks forth into the beautiful strains of his 'Compleynt unto Pité,' whose contents I need not repeat here, as Dr. Furnivall has so ably detailed them in his 'Trial-Forewords' (p. 29 *seq.*).

As for the probable date of this group of poems, we see from the imitation of the Italians in the first of them that they cannot have been composed before November 1373, when Chaucer is back in England from his first Italian journey, and scarcely later than May 1374, his marriage, as I have tried to show before (§ 11), with Philippa taking place about June in the same year. For that it was she whom he had addressed in so humble a way in his 'Compleynts'—as I formerly thought possible[1]—is not very likely: a lady of noble birth would never have condescended to go and live in a common citizen's house in London. Nor is it probable that those poems could have been written very much later, as Chaucer's amorous poetry of his riper years, so far as it is preserved to us, is either not personal (see the Complaints of 'Mars,' 'Anelida,' and 'Venus'), though, of course, a good deal of personal experience is embodied in it, or has a more ironical tone: so 'Merciless Beaute' —which in its first two triplets, indeed, reminds one very much of 'Pité,' but in its third strikes a tune quite different from anything written in this period,—'Newfangelnesse,' if genuine (see below, § 22), and the lately discovered lines 'To Rosamounde.'[2]

The Valentine's Day[3] of the 'Amorous Compleynt' (l. 85) would, therefore, be that of the year 1374, and

[1] See Ausgewählte Dichtungen, p. ix.

[2] By Prof. Skeat, in the *Athenæum*, No. 3310, p. 440.

[3] The assertion of MS. Harl. 7333, that this Complaint was made "in the laste May tofore Novembre," seems to be mere nonsense.

the 'Compleynt unto Pité' would follow soon after. The poet then, seeing the hopelessness of his wooing, appears to have given up his high-flown ideas, and to have satisfied himself with a more modest lot: that of a comptroller in London harbour, and a husband of an old friend (and cousin?) of his, Philippa Chaucer, whose acquaintance he had made whilst in service at court.

Before going on with our researches into the dates of Chaucer's other writings, another question wants an answer. Is the lady to whom the above 'Compleynts' are devoted the same as the one to whom the poet alludes in the opening lines of his 'Deeth of Blanche the Duchesse' (l. 35 *seqq.*)? This must remain doubtful; but as Chaucer, in the last-quoted passage, expresses himself rather coolly about his love affair, he seems to have considered it quite at an end, and may have conceived a new passion afterwards, whose object he at last makes bold to address in those 'Compleynts.' For if we make 1369 the date of the 'Duchesse,' the expressions of "*ful yore*" (Compl. B, l. 85), "*yore ago*," and "*by lengthe of certeyn yeres*" ('Pité,' ll. 1 and 8), written in 1374, would—even if not referring to the same affair—be quite applicable.

§ 13. '*St. Cecily.*'—About the same time as these love-poems, or more likely shortly after them, we must date the 'Life of St. Cecily,' which Chaucer later inserted in his 'Canterbury Tales' as the Second Nun's Tale. That this story originally formed a separate poem, is not only shown by the poet's enumerating it as such in the Prologue of his 'Legende of Good Women' (l. 426), but by some lines (62 and 78, ed. Morris) which prove that the whole was at first not intended to represent a tale spoken by a woman. And that this Life cannot have been written before Chaucer's first Italian journey

is made evident by some imitations from Dante's 'Paradise.'[1]

When we now find that the author, in his introductory stanzas, complains of his *ydelnesse* (l. 10 *seqq.*), *fals affeccioun* (l. 74), etc., which he hopes to overcome by fervent prayer and by his translation of the 'Legend,' the most natural interpretation of these expressions would be, that Chaucer—seeing the vanity of life at court, and the futility of his ill-placed and unrequited love—began to look for consolation in religion, and that later on, in order not to fall again into the trap of idleness, he resolved to lead a quiet, domestic life, far from the seductions of the great world. In this mood he would feel most inclined to accept the prosaic office of a Comptroller, and to marry a sensible, plain woman, for whom otherwise he felt no great affection—such a one as we should, from our author's later allusions, have imagined Mistress Philippa to have been. So I put 'St. Cecily' after 'Pité,' in the spring of 1374.

§ 14. '*The Wrecched Engendrynge of Mankynde.*'—In the first years of his married life I should fancy Chaucer busy looking after the duties of his new office, and employing his leisure hours in reading and writing. Whether it was about this time that he translated Pope Innocent's 'De Miseria Humanæ Conditionis,' which he himself mentions in the first cast of the Prologue of the 'Legende of Good Women' (ll. 414 and 415),[2] cannot be decided, as this work of his is lost; but, as Dr. Koeppel has lately shown,[3] there are some passages in the Man of

[1] See ten Brink, Studien, p. 131 *seqq.*, and Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, 59 *seqq.* Cf. E. Koeppel, *Anglia*, N. F. II., p. 228 *seqq.*, and ten Brink, *Engl. Studien*, xvii, p. 1 *seqq.*

[2] "*He hath in prose translated Boece;*
And of the Wrecched Engendring of Mankynde,
As man may in Pope Innocent yfynde;" (Prof. Skeat's Ed.)

[3] See *Archiv f. d. Studium der Neueren Sprachen*, vol. lxxxiv, p. 405 *seqq.*

Lawe's and the Pardoner's Tales (perhaps also in the Wife of Bath's Prologue, the Monk's and the Parson's Stories), which are clearly borrowed from Innocent's treatise. From this circumstance Dr. Koeppel is inclined to conclude[1] that Chaucer was busy with the translation of the 'Wrecched Engendrynge of Mankynde' at the time when the first redaction of the Prologue of the 'Legende of Good Women' was made, and that the omission of this work from the list of his writings in the second cast points to the poet's having meanwhile given up the idea of ever completing his Englishing of that treatise. In my opinion, however, the general character of the poems shortly preceding the 'Legende of Good Women' ('Troilus,' 'Parlament,' 'Hous of Fame') does not make it very likely that our poet would, about this time, have given so much way to ascetic feelings as to translate 'De Miseria Humanæ Conditionis.' This turn of his mind would far better suit the period when the 'Life of St. Cecily' and 'Boece' were being written; besides, one should notice the close connection in which the poet places Pope Innocent's treatise with the last-named work (see note 2 above). So the omission of those lines from the second cast of the Prologue may have been due to some mistake of the author's or the scribe's; or they may have been rejected by the former on account of his having finally given up the intention of finishing his translation of the above work, begun some time before. The 'A B C,' however, which Prof. ten Brink wishes to put in the same period, is, I should think, much earlier.[2]

§ 15. *Astronomy, 'Boece,' 'Palamon and Arcitas.'*— After this devotional work, Chaucer seems to have turned to secular study again, especially to *astronomical* (also astrological) *books*, his later works more or less abound-

[1] See *l. c.*, p. 410 *seqq.*, and cf. Engl. Stud. xvii, p. 13—23, and the Appendix.

[2] See above, § 4.

ing in allusions to this science. At the same time he may have begun to occupy himself with 'Boece,' though his translation of the Latin philosopher's 'Consolatio' was only finished about the time when he was working at his 'Troilus,'[1] of which hereafter (see § 18 *seqq.*).

The poetical work, which must be dated about 1375-76, is his first version of 'Palamon and Arcitas.' As I have discussed this subject at large in a previous paper,[2] a few remarks will be sufficient here. The poet himself tells us, in his Prologue to the 'Legende of Good Women,' ll. 420-1, that he made—

> " . . *al the love of Palamon and Arcite*
> *Of Thebès, thogh the story is knowen lite*—"

which implies that he had translated Boccaccio's 'Teseide' before it was worked up so as to fit into the 'Canterbury Tales' as the Knight's Story. Apparently, later on he was not satisfied with this translation, and resolved to make of it something better suiting the taste of his riper years. But before he hit upon its transformation into the Knight's Tale, he made use of certain passages for several of his poems; he inserted some stanzas into the 'Troilus,' others into 'Queen Anelida and the False Arcyte,' others into the 'Parlament of Foules.' So it follows that his first rejected version of the 'Teseide' must have been written before those poems, the date of which, as we shall see afterwards (§§ 18-21), can be partly fixed with greater certainty after 1380. And a closer imitation of the Italian poet's sentimentality would exactly agree with the aforesaid period of Chaucer's life.

§ 16. '*Mars.*'—The next poem whose date can be exactly fixed is the 'Complaint of Mars.'[3] Let us first

[1] See ten Brink, Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, pp. 64 and 80.

[2] Essays on Chaucer, Part III, p. 359 *seqq.*; see also ten Brink, *l. c.* p. 65 *seqq.*

[3] The Complaint of Venus, which has often been closely connected with it, belongs to a much later period; see § 39, and cf. Skeat's Minor Poems, pp. lxxix and 392.

consider the astronomical allusions contained in it.[1] The poet tells us of a meeting between Mars and Venus, in the sign Taurus, where they are surprised by the Sun, on his entering the same sign, on the 12th of April; that is an allegorical description of a conjunction of the Sun with Mars and Venus, in Taurus. The question is then, Is there a year between 1370 and about 1390 in which such an event really did take place?

Professor Thurein, of Berlin, who kindly undertook the astronomical calculation a few years ago, gives the following answer[2]:—

"Let us start from the year 1370, 510 years before 1880.

There have elapsed 500 years	=	182,500 days.
,, ,, ,, 10 ,, ...	=	3,650 ,,
Leap days in 500 years = 5·25	=	125 ,,
,, from 1870—1880	=	2 ,,
		186,277 ,,
Deduct from this sum the leap days of 1700 and 1800	=	2 ,,
Deduct from this sum the days from the 5th till the 14th of Oct. 1582	=	10 ,,
		186,265 ,,

	186,265 days				186,265 days.
800 periods of Venus =	179,760 ,,		200 periods of Mars =		137,396 ,,
	6,505 ,,				48,869 ,,
20 ,,	4,494 ,,		70 ,,		48,088·6 ,,
	2,011 ,,				780·4 ,,
8 ,,	1,797·6 ,,		1 ,,		686·98 ,,
	213·4 ,,		,,		93·42 ,,
Thus there are wanting for the completion of one period	11·3 ,,	=	,,		593·56 ,,

"Now, adding the 102 days which have elapsed from the beginning of the year until the 12th day of April, we find for Venus 113·3 days, and for Mars 695·56—686·98=8·58. These figures are for

[1] Cf. Trial-Forewords, p. 86.

[2] See Elementare Darstellung der Planetenbahnen durch Konstruktion und Rechnung von Hermann Thurein. Berlin, 1886, p. 20 *seq.*; reprinted Anglia, IX, p. 582 *seq.*

the year 1370. Adding to these respectively 365 and 366 (and, if the sum be greater than the number of days necessary for a period of Venus or Mars, subtracting these latter), we obtain the figures for the following years. These show in the respective tables (see pp. 27 and 28 in this treatise) the heliocentric longitudes, etc., from which the geocentric ones can be found in the manner indicated above (see p. 7, *l.c.*). The conjunction is to take place near Taurus, which lies between 30° and 60° of longitude. On account of the position of the Sun, only the sign, not the constellation, of Taurus can be meant here. But, the vernal point having retrograded, in 510 years, $510 \times 50{\cdot}236'' = 7°\,7'$, the sign of Taurus, as it was in the 14th century, is now between 23° and 53°. So we have only to consider the positions of the two planets which are near these points. Continuing the calculation until the year 1390, we shall find that the positions of the two planets approximately correspond to the above conditions only in the years 1371 and 1379. On the 12th of April, 1371, Venus is in 13·8 longitude and Mars 3·9; and on the same day in 1379 Venus stands 10·3 and Mars 7·17. Continuing these calculations for the following days, we shall see that both planets have the same longitude on the 20th of April, 1371, and on the 14th of April, 1379; in each case about 9°. In 1371 the Sun is already 7° in Taurus, in 1379 he has just entered the same. The latter year therefore appears to be the more likely."

But do the facts and personages alluded to in this poem agree with this date? Some clue to them we find in Shirley's Trinity MS. Cambridge,[1] who tells us that this Complaint was written at the request of Duke John of Lancaster, about Isabel, Duchess of York, daughter of the King of Spain, and the Earl of Huntingdon, afterwards Duke of Exeter. So Isabel would represent Venus, and as for her character, we find that, in fact, she was somewhat wanton in her younger years.[2] That the Earl of Huntingdon might be compared with Mars is not quite so clear, as there is not much reported about his warlike deeds. But considering that he took part in Edward III's expedition into Scotland (in 1355), and that he was made constable of John of Gaunt's army in Castile (in 1385-6),[3] he must have had some reputation as a warrior or

[1] See Trial-Forewords, p. 80; cf. Minor Poems, ed. Skeat, p. lix.

[2] See Walsingham's *Chronicle*, as quoted, *l. c.* p. 81.

[3] *L. c.* p. 82 *seqq.*—Cf. also ten Brink's Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, 76, *seqq.*

general. Furthermore we learn about him that he was of a violent character, as he stabbed Ralph, heir to the Earl of Stafford (in 1383-84); and that the Mars of the poem was rather a rough sort of fellow, seems to be hinted at by ll. 32-39 of the Complaint, where we read that Venus held him in her "subjection," and had so humbled him, that he had entirely given up his "cruelty" and "tyranny." Phœbus then must have been Edmund, the fifth son of Edward III, who, in 1386, was made Duke of York. The love-affair between Isabel and the Earl of Huntingdon would most probably have taken place during Edmund's absence from England, and, indeed, we find in Dugdale's 'Baronage' that he was in the king's fleet at sea in 1377-79. So it would appear that he unexpectedly returned in April 1379, and caused the two lovers to separate.

Now if the event evidently referred to in his 'Mars' took place in April 1379, the date of the poem itself must have been somewhat later, perhaps written about the 14th of February (see l. 14, *seqq.*) 1380, though the St. Valentine's day mentioned here may be only a fictitious date. But now looking backward to the last poem of Chaucer's, the approximate time of composition of which I have tried to fix, we see that it was his first version of 'Palamon and Arcitas,' which I supposed was written about 1375-76. How is the gap between these two dates to be filled up?

§ 17. *Travels Abroad. Study of Astronomy and Latin Authors. Change of Tone.*—Taking up Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Life of Chaucer,'[1] or Dr. Furnivall's 'Dates of Events in Chaucer's Life,'[2] we shall find that our poet was several times sent abroad on special missions from the end of 1376 until the beginning of 1378, his longest absence from England being from May 1378 till February 1379

[1] See Morris's ed. p. 21 *seqq.*, and Notes, p. 97 *seqq.*
[2] Trial-Forewords, p. 21 *seqq.*

(about), when he was with Sir Edward Barkeley on a certain negotiation in Lombardy. So it is evident that Chaucer, during this period, could not have found much leisure for study and poetical productions. He could scarcely have done much more than continue his astronomical researches and readings in Latin authors. At any rate he gives us some proof of his having studied these subjects, in his 'Mars,' which abounds with astronomical and astrological allusions, and into which he has embodied the story of Mars and Venus taken from Ovid, and the one of the Brooch of Thebes, derived from Statius.[1] But we cannot discover any traces of his imitations of the Italians, or any of his excellent humour; 'Mars,' on the contrary, resembles more in its tone our poet's earlier Complaints.

At the same time, however, there is something more worldly about this poem:—it treats no more of chaste, but hopeless, unrequited love; it draws its subject from the scandalous chronicle of the time; it glorifies the illicit love-affair of two high-born personages, without the least moral scruple. And, indeed, Chaucer himself appears about this time to have lost his former inclinations towards a quiet, domestic, and religious life. For it was before May 1380 when he committed the rape of Cecilia Chaumpaigne,[2] a most unpleasant affair indeed, but which may give us some clue to the poet's change of tone in his poems composed after this time. He was no longer a devoted believer in women, and may have learned by experience the weaknesses of human nature in general. Besides, his repeated travels abroad, his intercourse with all sorts and conditions of men, his relations to the great people at court, especially to John of Gaunt, seems to have greatly influenced his mind. And

[1] Skeat's ed., p. lx.

[2] See Trial-Forewords, Further Additions, pp. 136—144.

even his translation of Boece's '*Consolatio Philosophiæ*,' which must have been finished by this time, taught him to see the fickleness of Fortune and the inconstancy of earthly happiness.[1]

§ 18. '*Filostrato*'—'*Troilus*'—'*Adam Scriveyn.*'—This contradiction between Chaucer's more realistic turn of mind and his former sentimentality produced his inclination to irony, which later on developed into his charming humour, so much admired by every reader of his riper poetry. So his translation of Boccaccio's 'Filostrato'—a MS. of which he may have brought home from his second Italian journey—could never be a literal one. And although our poet never entirely lost his taste for describing the tender feelings of lovers, their outbursts of passion and despair, he could no longer go on in the same strain, as his Italian model does. And so he created his Pandarus, an odd mixture of good-nature, irony, and common-place wisdom.

As for a more exact date of the 'Troilus,' there is not much to be found in the poem itself. We know that besides his use of the 'Filostrato,'[2] Chaucer took passages also from Dante, Petrarca, Boece, occasionally from Statius, Macrobius, and the 'Romaunt of the Rose.'[3] But from these names not much more can be concluded than that our poet had finished his translation of 'De Consolatione Philosophiæ' about the time when he was writing the 'Troilus'; and, indeed, in his well-known humorous lines to 'Adam Scriveyn,' both works are mentioned together as the author's recent productions. A more curious fact, however, is that towards the end of 'Troilus' (V, l. 1807-27) a few stanzas from 'Palamon and Arcitas' have been inserted,[4] but are only found

[1] See ten Brink, *l. c.* II, pp. 80-3.

[2] See Mr. Rossetti's comparison between Chaucer and Boccaccio, Chauc. Soc., 1st Series, Nos. 44 and 45.

[3] See ten Brink, Studien, pp. 83-85.

[4] See ten Brink, *l. c.* p. 60 *seqq.*

in some of the MSS.[1] As these, however, are the best and oldest (Campsall and Harl. 2280), it would appear that Chaucer did not transfer those stanzas into the first cast of the 'Troilus,' from which the copies of the younger MSS. appear to be derived, but that he himself added them to a later, revised edition, when he had made up his mind entirely to re-write his 'Palamon and Arcitas,' and had begun to use passages from the original shape of this poem for his later compositions.[2]

§ 19. *Moral Gower.*—Another hint concerning the date of 'Troilus' we may take from its being dedicated to Moral Gower—who is mentioned as one of Chaucer's friends as early as 1378[3]—Book IV, line 1856, and to 'Philosophical Strode.'[4] The question is now, Which of Gower's writings earned for him the name of a moral author? Of his earliest production, 'Speculum Meditantis,' no copy has come down to us, but we know that it treated about vices and virtues.[5] If, however, any one should consider Gower's claim to the title of a moral teacher not sufficiently established by this work, we can remind him that the same author's 'Vox Clamantis' must have been begun shortly after Wat Tyler's insurrection in May 1381;[6] and though he probably did not finish this poem in the same year, the acquaintance with its first book, which Chaucer, as the poet's friend, may certainly be supposed to have made as soon as it was more or less completed, together with the knowledge of the 'Speculum Meditantis,' would be cause enough for

[1] See Mr. Rossetti's note, *l. c.* p. 299.

[2] See Essays, etc., pp. 385-86, note.

[3] Trial-Forewords, p. 22.

[4] Lived about 1370; cf. Morley, Engl. Wr. IV, 239-40; Ward's Chaucer, p. 80.

[5] Morley, *l. c.* IV, 171; ten Brink, Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, 102.

[6] See ten Brink, Gesch., etc. II, pp. 102-4; K. Meyer, John Gower's beziehungen zu Chaucer und König Richard II, pp. 24 and 36; Ward's Chaucer, p. 81.

the latter to address his friend as moral Gower, independent of his personal knowledge of him. At any rate, there is nothing in this appellation which would compel us to put the completion of the 'Troilus' later than 1382.

§ 20. '*The Parlament of Foules.*'—The reason why I insist so much upon this date, is because I believe that the last-named poem was finished before the 'Parlament of Foules,' which I was the first to bring into connection with King Richard's marriage with Anne of Bohemia,[1] a view since then adopted by Prof. Ward,[2] Professor ten Brink,[3] and others. This marriage took place on the 14th of January, 1382, but the negotiations had already commenced a year before. Now as the 'Parlament' does not allude to the final success of the royal eagle's wooing, I thought at first that Chaucer only meant to express his good wishes for Richard's courtship. But then I had overlooked some lines in the poem itself, where the author, imploring Venus's assistance, says—

(*l.* 117) "*As wisly as I saw thee north-north-west*[4]
When I began my sweven for to wryte,
So yif me might to ryme and to endyte."

It is clear that Chaucer tells us here that he saw the star Venus, at the time when he began to write the poem, in the north-west, *i. e.* as an evening star. As Venus always appears to us near the sun, and as the latter is seen in the direction of the north-west only in the months of May, June, July, or August, it follows that Chaucer began this work in one certain year in which Venus was visible as an evening star in one of the above-named months. This observation I first

[1] See Engl. Stud. I, p. 288; and Essays, etc., pp. 406-7.
[2] Chaucer, pp. 86-7. [3] Gesch., etc., p. 85.
[4] Perhaps better, *west-north-west*. See Ausgewählte Kleinere Dichtungen Chaucers, pp. x and xi.

made when I was translating some of Chaucer's 'Minor Poems' into German,[1] and so I asked a mathematical friend to find out for me the year between 1373 and 1384 in which such a position of Venus did take place. He found by calculation[2] that such an event can only have occurred in 1374, 1377, 1380, 1382, and 1383, during the aforesaid period.[3] The two first years being too early, the last-named somewhat too late, the question would naturally be, whether the 'Parlament' was written in 1380 or 1382. In my translation I assumed the year 1380 as the more likely one; but now I see that then the poet could scarcely have had sufficient interest in an enterprise which may have been the general talk at court, but the success of which must have appeared too doubtful to found a complimentary poem upon;—1381 being, from astronomical reasons, out of the question, I now agree with Prof. ten Brink,[4] who makes 1382 the date of the 'Parlament of Foules.' If so, the poet must have begun to write in May or June,[5] as in July as well as in August of the same year Venus was only visible in the morning.

§ 21. *The 'Parlament' and 'Troilus.'*—As for the reasons which induce me to place the 'Parlament' after the 'Troilus,' I have stated part of them at length in my former Essay (pp. 401-4), so that a short repetition of them will suffice here. First, I pointed out that the name of 'Troilus' occurs in l. 291 of the 'Parlament,' as one of the types of amorous passion in the description of Venus's temple. Then, referring to the last stanza of this poem, I showed that Chaucer expresses in it his

[1] Ausgewählte Kleinere Dichtungen Chaucers, etc. Leipz., 1880.

[2] *L. c.*, note on p. 60.

[3] The latter is an addition of Prof. Thurein, who was kind enough to revise the calculation before-mentioned, and who has arrived, on the whole, at the same results.

[4] Gesch., etc., p. 85.

[5] In May, Venus was 44° 30′ from the north, in June 49° 36′.

hope that, by continual study, he will find some day a subject more worthy of his pains. If he speaks in such vague terms of this expectation, he must either not yet have read Boccaccio's 'Filostrato,' or he must have already finished its translation, or rather adaptation. But as he mentions its hero in such a way as if he expects every reader or hearer of his 'Parlament' to understand the allusion, the latter is the more likely case.

Furthermore, if Chaucer, towards the end of his 'Troilus and Cryseide,' which he calls "a little tragedy," expresses the wish soon to write a "comedy" (according to Dante's theory, of course), he could scarcely have done so if he had already finished his 'Parlament,' which certainly has more the character of the latter, though the poet may have had in view a more ambitious production, perhaps his 'Hous of Fame,' as Prof. ten Brink assumes. At any rate, there is decidedly more similarity between the 'Parlament' and 'Fame,' than between the latter and 'Troilus.'

And lastly, I should like to add, the insertion of the three stanzas from his translation of the 'Teseide' mentioned above, seems to have come into Chaucer's mind only after he had finished his 'Troilus.' For then he saw clearly that his 'Palamon and Arcitas' could no longer suit his ripened taste; and so he began to make use of some passages of this poem for descriptions, etc., in his later compositions. But while his borrowings from 'Palamon and Arcitas' are well combined with the other portions of the 'Parlament,'[1] those in 'Troilus' are apparently a later addition; and so I presume that Chaucer was struck with the fitness of those stanzas on Arcite's death for the prolongation of his rather too abrupt description of Troilus's decease, only when he

[1] See Essays, etc., pp. 367-69.

had begun to transfer some passages of his 'Palamon,' etc. into the 'Parlament,' which would be an additional proof that this latter poem followed 'Troilus and Cryseide.'

§ 22. *'Merciles Beaute,' 'New-Fangelnesse,' 'Rosamounde.'*—About the same time two, perhaps three, smaller poems may have been written, whose genuineness though is not quite settled, at least there is not sufficient positive proof of it. One of them is the same as Prof. Skeat, in his edition of the 'Minor Poems,'[1] calls 'Merciles Beaute,' which Bishop Percy first attributed to Chaucer, and which Prof. Mätzner republished in his 'Altenglische Sprachproben,' as a specimen of our author's 'Minor Poems.' It is only preserved in one MS. (Pepys 2006), which also contains several other pieces of Chaucer.[2] I am not quite so sure of its internal evidence as Prof. Skeat; but as there is nothing that can speak against its author being Chaucer—on the contrary, tone, expression, rhyme are quite in his best style—I think we ought not to be over-sceptical, but admit it as genuine.[3] If so, the three roundels composing this poem could not have been written until Chaucer had overcome his sentimentality, and had begun to think of love in a more ironical way, that is, about the same period when he was writing his 'Troilus.'

Soon after he had finished this last-named work I suppose the second poem must have been composed, the one to which Prof. Skeat[4] gives the title of 'Against Women Unconstant,' but which, I think, is more appropriately styled 'New-Fangelnesse,' as Dr. Furnivall does.[5]

[1] See p. lxvii, *seq.*, pp. 100-1, and pp. 308-9.

[2] Legende of Good Women, A B C, Hous of Fame, Mars, Venus, etc.

[3] Dr. Furnivall has lately also given in; see More Odd Texts, etc., pp. 6 and 51-2.

[4] He follows Speght, see p. lxxvii, *seq.*; pp. 199-200, pp. 387-8.

[5] See Odd Texts, etc., Appendix; cp. More Odd Texts, p. 6.

While the former is fully convinced of its authenticity, the latter still remains doubtful. As for me, I must own that Prof. Skeat's reasons for accepting this poem as a genuine one do not appear to me quite conclusive. Still, as it is found in three MSS. (Fairfax 16, Cott. Cleop. D. 7, Harl. 7578) among a number of Chaucer's undoubted works, I think that this circumstance speaks very much in favour of its genuineness, considering that its style, metre, and rhyme are quite worthy of him. Finally, l. 16 ought to be noticed, where the name of Creseide occurs as an instance of female inconstancy. It is not impossible, of course, that some other author may have used that name as well; still, taken together with the above statements, I think it more likely that Chaucer himself introduced that allusion to one of his own works.

The third poem, which may be placed with these two above, is the one which Prof. Skeat only lately discovered.[1] It is entitled by him 'To Rosamounde,' and contains a humorous confession of love. The skilful handling of the very difficult rhyme (twelve times in *-ounde*) and the funny comparisons would be sufficient to make its genuineness probable; but in the unique MS. in which it is found it is expressly ascribed to Chaucer by the copyist. As this ballad here immediately follows the 'Troilus,' this may be taken as an indication that it was also written soon after this work.

On the whole I am inclined to place these three ditties in the same period of Chaucer's life, for apparently their author is no more a young man: he has had some experience with women; and their refusal and inconstancy do not call forth his tears and wailings, but his laugh

[1] See *Athenæum*, No. 3310 (April 4th, 1891), p. 440. Dr. Furnivall says that Mr. George Parker showed it him many years before, and that he told Mr. Parker to copy it, but both of them forgot all about it, being busy with the Troilus, &c.

and mockery. Nor can he be quite an old man, as he still finds pleasure in making love and flirtation; at least, according to what we know of Chaucer's old age, and his poetry written in the last decade of his life, one would scarcely imagine him as an elderly beau who is fond of paying his compliments to younger ladies and sending billets-doux to them. On the contrary, in his later productions we find only complaints about his old age, his neglect at court, and the badness of the world in general (for particulars see below, §§ 39 and 49).

So I think myself justified in ascribing these three poems to the time when Chaucer's fun and humour had developed themselves, and before his misfortunes had begun to depress his spirit, *i. e.* ab. 1380—1384. This approximate date would very well agree with the repeated allusions to unrequited love in 'Troilus and Cryseide' (3rd stanza), the 'Parlament' (2nd stanza), and the 'Hous of Fame' (ll. 615-19, 628, 639-40).

That the humorous lines to 'Adam Scriveyn' fall into this same period has been shown before.

§ 23. '*Hous of Fame.*'—Not much need be said here about the 'Hous of Fame,' as the date ascribed to it by Prof. ten Brink is so well established that scarcely any doubt can be raised against it. As I have repeated the Professor's ingenious arguments at some length in my Essay reprinted by the Chaucer Society, it will be sufficient to give only the outlines here. Towards the end of the 'Troilus' (V, st. 256)—his "tragedy," says ten Brink[1]—our poet expresses his wish to write some day a "comedy"; this appellation would be best applicable to the 'Hous of Fame.' But Chaucer also hints in his 'Troilus' (V, 254) at his intention of composing a book about good and virtuous ladies. When writing his 'Hous of Fame,' this idea seems to have taken a more

[1] Studien, pp. 114-16, 122-24, and 150-1; cf. Prof. Skeat's edition of the Legende of Good Women, pp. viii—x.

definite shape (see ll. 382—425), and was finally executed in the 'Legende of Good Women.' This latter poem, being dedicated to Queen Anne (Prol. B., l. 496), must have been written after January 1382, when the queen's marriage took place, and after the 'Hous of Fame' (see Prol. B., l. 417), which is mentioned in the 'Legend.' Furthermore, our poet complains, in the 'Hous of Fame,' ll. 641—60 (II, 133—152), of the burden of his official duties, which allow him only the late hours of the night for his study. When we find that he was partly relieved from those duties in February 1385, we must conclude that the 'Hous of Fame' was composed before this date. And finally, Chaucer mentions in the same poem (l. 63) the tenth of December as the date for his supposed dream; the day appears to have been a Thursday, because the poet several times (ll. 609, 642, 661, etc.) states that he owes his visit to the House of Fame to Jupiter. Now the tenth of December was a Thursday in 1383, and so it is most likely that the poem was commenced on this day, but its greater portion written during the following year.[1]

§ 24. '*The Legende of Good Women.*'—Whether Chaucer ever finished the 'Hous of Fame,' or whether it has only come down to us in an unfinished state, cannot be decided with absolute certainty. But it is not improbable that its composition was interrupted by another work of more importance, the 'Legende of Good Women,' which, as Lydgate tells us in the Prologue to the 'Falls of Princes,' was written "*at the request of the quene.*"[2] Though Prof. Skeat doubts the correctness of

[1] The objections lately raised in the *Academy* (Nos. 887 and 891) by Mr. Palgrave have been sufficiently refuted by Mr. Herford (*ib.* Nos. 889 and 893), so that I need not recur to them at length again.

[2] See Skeat's edition of the Legend, p. xi.

this statement, I think it not at all unlikely,[1] as the contents of the Prologue, especially ll. 496-7, clearly show her influence upon the poem. The idea of it may very well have been Chaucer's own—see the allusions in 'Troilus' and the 'Hous of Fame' mentioned before—but Queen Anne may have taken a particular interest in this conception, and may have encouraged the poet to execute his plan, even if she did not give him a direct order. Now if this poem was written after January 1382, and after the 'Hous of Fame' and 'Troilus,' which are mentioned in the Prologue, the question is, What can its latest date have been? As Prof. ten Brink points out, the poet does not repeat here his complaints about the hardships of his office, and so appears to have been released from them; and indeed we know that on the 17th of February, 1385, he was allowed to have a permanent deputy for the Comptrollership.[2] This would be just the moment when we should expect Chaucer to have written the Prologue, in which he seems to express, at the same time, his gratefulness to his royal patrons.

But there still remains a difficulty to be cleared away: there are two different forms of the Prologue extant, which both make the impression of being genuine. One of them, preserved only in one MS. (Cambr. Univers. Libr. Gg. 4. 27), appears to be the earliest cast; the other, somewhat altered and enlarged, a revised edition.[3] The alterations in this latter are evidently introduced to express more deeply the poet's feelings of veneration and gratitude to the queen. From this I conclude that the second form of the Prologue was written after Chaucer had obtained the long-wished-for favour of

[1] Cf. ten Brink, Gesch. d. Engl. Lit., II, 112.

[2] See Trial-Forewords, p. 25; Skeat's Legend, p. xi; ten Brink, Stud., p. 149.

[3] See Skeat, *l. c.*, pp. xii—xvii. See, however, the Appendix.

being released from part of his troublesome duties. The first cast would then have been composed early in 1385, or in the last months of 1384, together with some of the legends, of which at least that of Cleopatra must have been finished when Chaucer was writing the Prologue (see l. 566). And may not the leave of absence granted to him for a month on Nov. 25, 1384,[1] have been allowed to him on account of this very work? At all events, there is no objection against Chaucer's having begun the 'Legende' in the last-named year, as the 'Hous of Fame' is not bulky enough to have taken up all his leisure for a whole year.

Yet the 'Legende' was not destined either to be completed, which was partly owing, no doubt, to the circumstance that the poet evidently got tired of his theme, which did not allow him to indulge in his humorous turn of mind; see, for instance, the closing lines of 'Phyllis,' where he admonishes women not to trust in love any man but himself.[2] Partly he may have been induced to interrupt this work, because he had already fulfilled the queen's order, which bound him (see Prol. ll. 481-84) to devote only part of his leisure to composing 'Lives of Good Women'; partly also because a new project more attractive to his genius had sprung up, namely, the 'Canterbury Tales.' But certainly he had even then not quite given up his intention to write a continuation of his 'Legende,' as in the 'Man of Lawes Prologue' he returns to this subject again,[3] and, speaking of his own "seintes legend of Cupide," mentions the names of several unfortunate women, as if he had treated of them in this poem. But no trace of these 'Lives' being extant, it appears that the poet had only sketched, never entirely finished them.

[1] See Trial-Forewords, p. 24.
[2] See ten Brink, Gesch. d. Engl. Lit., II, p. 119.
[3] Ll. 60—76; cf. Skeat's Ed. p. xviii.

§ 25. '*Anelida and Arcite.*'—Before entering into the details of the 'Canterbury Tales,' however, a rather puzzling question remains to be solved—the date of 'The Compleynt of feire Anelida and fals Arcite.' The tone and the very artificial metre remind us very much of the 'Compleynt of Mars,' and the other amorous complaints treated of before, which even agree almost literally in a few lines with 'Anelida and Arcite.'[1] But, on the other hand, this poem cannot have been composed until Chaucer had resolved to rewrite his original version of 'Palamon and Arcite,' as several stanzas taken from the 'Teseide' are inserted into 'Anelida' etc.[2] We have seen before (see § 21) that Chaucer does not seem to have rejected his first redaction of that Italian poem till he had finished 'Troilus,' and had begun the 'Parlament.' Besides, in some of the MSS. a stanza is preserved which clearly indicates that the poet intended to continue 'Anelida and Arcite,' with a description of the temple of Mars—most likely an imitation from Boccace.

Turning now to the list of his own works in the 'Legende of Good Women,' we miss in it any allusion to 'Anelida and Arcite'; and this is the more curious, as the contents of the poem would have formed an excellent excuse against the accusations of the god of love, that Chaucer in his writings has chiefly represented women faithless to men,[3] for it is here the lover who betrays his lady. So it might be concluded that 'Anelida' was not yet composed at the time when Chaucer was at work on the Prologue of the 'Legende.' But when we see that 'Mars' (which was certainly written some years before

[1] See Skeat's Minor Poems, pp. lxix-lxx, and 400-1.

[2] See ten Brink, Studien, etc., pp. 49-53; Essays, etc., pp. 409-11; Skeat's Minor Poems, pp. 310-11.

[3] Ll. 333-4; more clearly expressed in the first cast of the Prologue, ll. 268-72.

the Prologue, see above, § 16) is not mentioned either in that list, and when we consider that there is no great difference in the length of the two poems ('Mars' having 298 lines, 'Anelida,' 357), the above conclusion becomes again more doubtful. Evidently our poet did not think these two poems important enough to name their titles expressly, and apparently includes them in these general allusions to his amorous compositions:—

(*he hath maked*)
many an hympne for your halydayes
That highten Balades, Roundels, Virelayes. (ll. 422-3)—and
He hath mad many a lay and many a thing (l. 430).

Nor can Prof. Skeat's interesting suggestion,[1] that the title of "quene of Ermony" (l. 71) may be connected with the arrival of the King of Armenia in England about Christmas 1384, be regarded as a sufficient foundation for the date of this poem, as Chaucer may have derived the name of Ermony from some other source.[2]

So, as there is no certain hold in the poem itself to fix its date, we must content ourselves with its general character as described before, from which it would appear that it was composed about 1382-84, perhaps in 1383, as in that year no other work of Chaucer's is to be dated, except the 'Hous of Fame,' as we have seen, which was probably begun on the 10th of December of that year. The poet, however, did not finish 'Anelida and Arcite' then; perhaps as he had not quite settled in his mind how to shape its continuation; perhaps, also, the lamentable story was no longer attractive for him. And when he had done part of the task given him by his royal patrons, the 'Legende of Good Women,' a new idea may have occurred to him, how to make use of the remainder of his 'Palamon and

[1] Minor Poems, p. lxix.

[2] There is, *e. g.*, a King of Armenia in the Old French poem of Cléomadès, by Adenès le Roi; see John Lane's Continuation of Chaucer's Squire's Tale, Analogues, etc., p. 386.

Arcite':—viz. for his 'Knight's Tale.' So the Tale of 'Anelida and Arcite' was left unfinished,[1] and only the Introduction and the Complaint have been handed down to us.

§ 26. *Attempts at fixing the date of the 'Canterbury Tales.'*—Turning now to the presumable date of the 'Canterbury Tales,' I must first state the general view that the supposed Pilgrimage which serves as the connecting link between the single Tales is based on a real event in Chaucer's life, and that he himself, at some time or other, took part in one going to Canterbury. This is clearly shown by his minute description of the time (see 'Man of Law's Head-link,' l. 5 *seq.*, and 'The Blank-Parson Link,' l. 4 *seq.*) and of the route his pilgrims took. And, indeed, several attempts have been made to find out, from these allusions, the exact day and year in which Chaucer either undertook a pilgrimage to Canterbury himself, or wishes his readers to believe that the narrators of those famous Tales did.

The first calculation for this purpose was made by Prof. Scherck, at the request of W. Hertzberg, who printed the same in his well-known German translation of the 'Canterbury Tales.' As I have given a close Englishing of this passage in the Chaucer Society's Essays, etc. (pp. 415-17), it will be sufficient here to mention the result of this investigation, viz., that the pilgrimage in question took place on the 28th of April, 1393.

But that this date could not be the right one was shown by Prof. Skeat in a sort of Appendix to my translation, in which he points out that the day mentioned in the 'Man of Law's Prologue' is the 18th of April, as most MSS. read.

So I made a fresh start in my 'Ausgewählte Kleinere Dichtungen Chaucers,' and found, assisted by a mathe-

[1] Prof. ten Brink still seems inclined to give it a much later date (see Gesch. d. Engl. Lit., II, 196).

matical friend, by making the necessary alterations in Prof. Scherck's calculation, that the presumable date was the 18th of April, 1391.

But the correctness of this result was again doubted by Herr Carl Ehrhart,[1] who points out that Prof. Scherck neglected the difference between the tropical and the common year. He therefore sets out on a new tour, taking for granted that the opening lines of the 'Parson's Prologue' allude to a position of the moon, from which it may be concluded that the last new moon in the year in question fell 13 days before, that is, starting from the above-named date (April 18th), on the 5th of April. In this way he finds that this event, during the latter part of the 14th century, occurred only in 1380 and 1399; both years which, from internal reasons, must be left out of consideration. Now Herr Ehrhart turns to Dr. Furnivall's scheme of a $3\frac{1}{2}$ days' journey of the pilgrims, which he changes into 3 days, as this time seems to him quite sufficient for their journey. According to Dr. Furnivall, however, he puts the 'Man of Law's Prologue,' in which the date of the 18th of April occurs, on the second day of the Pilgrimage, and consequently the date of the 'Parson's Prologue' (see above) on the 19th. Deducting now those 13 days, in order to find the supposed date of the last new moon, he discovers that it fell on the 6th April, 1388, the year of the 'Canterbury Tales.'

But when we ask ourselves if this result can be entirely relied upon, we have to answer with doubts again; for, firstly, the order of the single Tales is not at all a certain one, as Chaucer himself seems to have hesitated in assigning a definite place to some of them;[2]

[1] See Engl. Studien, XII., p. 468-9. Prof. Morley in his Engl. Writers, V., p. 325 note, erroneously quotes 'Schuchardt' as the author of this calculation.

[2] See ten Brink, Gesch. d. engl. Lit. II, 154-5.

secondly, if Herr Ehrhart takes the 18th of April as the second day of the journey, he will be obliged, according to the allusions in several of the Tales, as pointed out in Dr. Furnivall's scheme, to admit a fourth day (see below); a three days' journey can only be arranged if we put the 'Man of Law's Tale' into the first day. Besides, it is *à priori* more likely that the poet would have given us the exact date of the first day of this enterprise, not of the second. Thirdly, the explanation of the first 12 lines of the 'Parson's Prologue' is not at all such an easy one as Herr Ehrhart thinks (§ 35). And, lastly, the year 1388 has not much probability in itself, on account of the state of public affairs and Chaucer's personal circumstances at that time—whereof more hereafter.

§ 27. *Chaucer's situation in his later years.*—Because of all these uncertainties, I propose to take another direction in my researches for the date of the 'Canterbury Tales,' and begin with an examination of the facts in Chaucer's life and other circumstances which may give us a clue to answer this question.

We had accompanied our poet as far as February 1385, when he got leave to have a deputy in his laborious office. No doubt a very happy, if not the happiest, time of his life now began; he had more leisure for following his bent to study and poetry; he enjoyed the patronage of the king and the queen, and, certainly, had also friendly intercourse with the nobles at court and other great men of his time. But this state of earthly bliss did not last long. His old patron, John of Gaunt, left England in the summer of 1386 for a hazardous expedition into Spain, where he remained till 1389.[1] Meanwhile the Duke of Gloucester tried to get to the head of the administration, and on this account

[1] Cf. Nicolas, Life, etc., p. 33—37; Furnivall, Trial-Forewords, p. 25—27; ten Brink, Gesch. d. engl. Lit. II, 120—123.

quarrels and troubles arose between him and his nephew, the king, whose old adherents, and among them certainly Chaucer, were partly turned out of their offices, partly had to undergo far severer punishment. It is no doubt for this reason that our poet, in December 1386, lost both his offices. And yet another misfortune appears to have befallen him in the next year: the death of his wife, whose name is not mentioned after June 1387 in the list of pensioners. And even Chaucer's pecuniary circumstances seem to have been rather unsettled, since we find that in 1386 his grants were cancelled and assigned to some other person. In 1389 he indeed received the appointment of Clerk of the King's Works, with leave to appoint a deputy. This post, however, he lost again in 1391. But though in 1391 and 1397-98 he held the post of Forester of North-Petherton, and in 1394 Richard II. granted him another small pension, he appears to have been all the remainder of his life in straitened circumstances, as we over and over again read of loans in the Issue Rolls.

It would seem natural that, when our poet had to struggle so strongly against the hardships of life, and to suffer neglect from his former friends, he would scarcely feel inclined to begin a work so full of humour and fun as are (at any rate part of) his 'Canterbury Tales.' And, indeed, if we look again, as we did in the beginning of this paper (§ 2), to his later productions ('Lines to Skogan' and 'Venus'), and to the fruitless admonitions of his friend Gower (written about 1392-93) to compose in his "*daies olde*" his 'Testament of Love,' this view is well confirmed by the words of the poet himself.

From all these circumstances we must conclude that the time when Chaucer formed the plan of the 'Canterbury Tales' probably lies between 1385 (*i. e.* after the 'Legende of Good Women,' the 'Canterbury Tales' not

42846

being mentioned in the Prologue to the latter) and 1391-2 (when old age and distress began to work upon his mind), which, of course, does not exclude the possibility that he may have written some portions of this work in later years.

§ 28. *Internal reasons for the date of the 'Canterbury Tales.'*—Turning now to the question, into what special year the origin of the 'Canterbury Tales' fell, we shall first have to deduct the years 1387-88, which, as shown above, would scarcely appear propitious for giving rise to a series of, for the most part, sprightly and humorous stories. So we shall have to choose between 1385-6 and 1389-91. If we now take again into consideration the 'Man of Law's Prologue,' in which Chaucer, enumerating the contents of his 'Legende of Good Women,' pretends to have written also the sad stories of Penelope, Helen, Hero, Laodamia, Deianira, Hermione, and Briseis,[1] of which, in fact, no trace is left, the most likely conclusion will be (as I have already stated before), that whilst writing these lines our poet was contemplating a continuation of the 'Legende of Good Women.' Such an allusion, however, would be rather out of place, if made five or six years after beginning his composition of the 'Legend,' but would be very well applicable to a temporary interruption. For, as I take it, Chaucer's intention when writing the 'Man of Law's Prologue' was to assure the queen that, though busy with another work, he was still mindful of his promise to her to write the lives of nineteen women unfortunate in love. So this connection between the two works points more to the earlier date.

Further, we must not neglect the picture the poet draws of himself in the 'Prioress-Thopas Link,' where he makes the landlord, addressing him (Chaucer), say,

"*He in the waast is schape as wel as I*," etc.

[1] See Skeat's Edition of the Legend, p. xix.

And comparing this with the description of the Landlord in the General Prologue (ll. 751—756)—

"*A semely man oure Ooste was withalle*," etc.,

we must figure the poet to ourselves as a stately man of some forty years rather than as one who already feels old age approaching, and is "*hore and rounde of shape*" ('Skogan,' l. 31).

And finally, if we suppose Chaucer not to have invented the framework of his 'Canterbury Tales' till 1390 or 1391, what are we to imagine him occupied with between 1385 and these last-named years? Certainly he cannot have been working at the 'Legende of Good Women' all these five or six years, part of which poem he had no doubt already finished in 1385, when he wrote the Prologue for it. Prof. ten Brink, who has adopted this later date, is obliged to make the poet write some of the Tales (the Doctor's, the Wife of Bath's, the Merchant's, and the Clerk's) before he had conceived the idea of connecting these novelistic productions by the introduction of the pilgrimage to Canterbury; but the Professor does not fully explain his reasons for ascribing an earlier date to them.[1] But as none of them is men-

[1] See Gesch. d. engl. Lit. II, 124-36.—As for the Doctor's Tale (Virginia), he takes the lines about the education of children (especially ll. 93-102) as an allusion to Chaucer's own case, since, after the death of his wife he alone held the responsibility for his child or children being brought up in the proper way. In the stanza beginning with l. 995 of the Clerk's Tale, and complaining of the fickleness of the people, Prof. ten Brink finds an echo of the events of the year 1387, when Richard II was solemnly received by the same Londoners who, a short time before, had taken up his opponents' party. Both references may be true, but would quite as well serve to prove that the Canterbury Tales had been begun before these allusions were written. The close connection of the Doctor's Tale with the general plan is shown by l. 117: "*The doctour made þis descripcioun;*" that of the Clerk's is clearly seen by its head-link, the concluding stanza (ll. 1170-76), and the opening of the Merchant's Prologue. The Merchant's Tale, indeed, shows traces that it was not originally intended for him; for the praise of wedded life (ll. 1309-92) contradicts the Teller's view on the subject, as propounded in

tioned in the Prologue to the 'Legende of Good Women,' where of all the stories in the 'Canterbury Tales' the 'Life of St. Cecily,' afterwards used as the Second Nun's Tale, and 'Palamon and Arcite,' rewritten as the Knight's Tale, are alluded to as former productions, they must all have been composed in the latter part of 1385 or later still. And, in my opinion, it is quite as likely that Chaucer began those tales after the invention of the general plan of the 'Canterbury Tales,' but without at first fixing a certain place for them, as (Prof. ten Brink's suggestion) that they are earlier work afterwards inserted into the 'Canterbury Tales.' At any rate there is no internal reason, I think, which would *speak against the year* 1385-86 *being the period in which the 'Canterbury Tales' originated.*

§ 29. *The probable order of the 'Canterbury Tales.'*—Our next task will be to examine the 'Canterbury Tales' with a view to establish their order, as exactly as possible, according to the allusions to places and times they contain. The results of Dr. Furnivall's researches (see his Temporary Preface) in this respect are very valuable indeed; but as some few doubts remain, it is better to enter upon a new investigation than simply to follow his explanations.

But before proceeding in this direction I wish to state my conviction that Chaucer, when he conceived the idea of writing a series of Tales connected by a description of

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the Prologue (ll. 1223-28). Very curious is it also that the hint at the Wife of Bath's views on matrimony (l. 1685) is put into the mouth of one of the characters of the Tale, instead of being spoken by the Teller. But such incongruities occurring also in other Tales (so the Man of Law pretends, in his Prologue, l. 96, that he is going to speak in prose, whereas his Tale is written in stanzas; the Shipman speaks as if he belonged to the fair sex [see Hertzberg, note to l. 12,397, and Furnivall's Forewords, p. 10]), which no one claims for fragments written before the invention of the general plan, they cannot give strict evidence in favour of the above Tales having been composed before the framework of the Pilgrimage.

a pilgrimage to Canterbury, had at once formed a distinct notion of the time which he wished to represent to his readers as being taken up by the journey in question, and of the places which his pilgrims were to reach at certain moments during their ride. For, as there is every reason to believe that our poet himself took part in such a pilgrimage (see § 26), he must have known by experience the duration and the stages of a journey of this description. The fragmentary state of his collection of Tales, however, makes it evident that he had not always fixed upon an exact plan for the arrangement of those narrations, or to which of the Tellers he was to ascribe each of them. But a certain conception for the connection of those Tales is, in my opinion, clearly visible: Chaucer intended to introduce a constant change in the tone of his stories, and only to link similar ones together when they treated of the same subject though in different style, or when he wanted to represent their Tellers chaffing each other.

§ 30. *The First Group of Tales.*—The beginning is easy enough. The first group of Tales "inseparably" linked together is undoubtedly formed by the 'General Prologue' and the Tales of the 'Knight,' the 'Miller,' and the 'Reeve,' with their intermediate links.[1] From these we learn that the pilgrims meet on a certain day in April at the "Tabbard" in Southwark (Gen. Prol. l. 20), and start the next morning with sunrise (*ib.*, l. 822), *i. e.* about five o'clock, on their pilgrimage. When it is past "prime" (Miller-Reeve Link, l. 3906), *i. e.* some time between six and nine o'clock in the morning,[2] they have reached Deptford and Greenwich, consequently have gone a distance of about five miles.

But now begins the puzzle. The 'Cook's Prologue,'

[1] See Dr. Furnivall's Temp. Pref., pp. 17-19 and 42-3.

[2] See *Ibid.* p. 19, note 2, and Hertzberg, note to line 2191. Cf. Pennell's Canterbury Pilgrimage, p. 14.

which is closely connected with the 'Reeve's Tale' (see l. 4325), seems to be all right, but of his story we have only a fragment left, which clearly shows that its contents were to be of the same vulgar character as those of the two foregoing stories. Why did Chaucer, then, stop in the middle? I suppose, because he felt that a series of three succeeding tales of the same cynical turn would not be very suitable to a clever arrangement.[1] So he stopped, either with an intention to make the Cook tell a different sort of tale (perhaps he meant to improve upon the story of Gamelyn,[2] as originally written by some other author, and found here inserted in a great number of MSS.), or to leave the introduction of this personage till some later occasion (see the Manciple's Head-link).

Who is the next Teller? Dr. Furnivall thinks that "Chaucer meant to insert here the Tales of some, at least, of the five City-Mechanics and the Ploughman[3] . . in order to bring his party to their first night's resting-place, Dartford, fifteen miles from London,"[4] but offers no reason for this supposition.[5] I don't see why he will not let the 'Man of Law's Prologue' follow here, which, with its date of 18th of April (l. 5), and its ten o'clock in the morning (l. 14), would suit here very well indeed. For, in my opinion, it is highly improbable that Chaucer should have made his pilgrims stop their journey as soon as they had reached Dartford, where they must have arrived about eleven o'clock in the morning, considering that they came as far as Deptford by seven or eight o'clock (see above), and had set out quite fresh at daybreak. Furthermore, I think it much more likely, as already mentioned, that, if the poet wished to

[1] See ten Brink, *l. c.* II, p. 161. [2] *Ibid.* p. 196.
[3] He quotes Tyrwhitt, iv. 188, *Int. Disc.* § xlii., etc.
[4] Temp. Pref., p. 19.
[5] See one below, in the note, p. 59.—F. J. F.

give his readers a hint about the date of the pilgrimage, he would have chosen that of the first day—supposing that there are several—instead of that of the second, or, if the latter, that he would have expressed this intention more plainly. And lastly, the hour of "*ten o'clokke*" would answer very well to the "*prime*" of one of the foregoing links (the Reeve's). That what we have under the title of the 'Man of Law's Tale' was perhaps at first not meant for this Teller, I have mentioned before (§ 28, note); but there can scarcely be any doubt that Chaucer himself afterwards inserted it in this place.

§ 31. *The Second Group.*—The question whom the poet intended to be the next Teller, is perhaps still more difficult to decide.[1] In the link following the 'Man of Law's Tale' one of the pilgrims pushes the Parish Priest aside in order to tell a merry Tale himself. Who is this fellow? Some of the MSS.[2] name here the 'Sompnour'; but as his Tale is "inseparably" linked with the Friar's, it is evident that Chaucer later on altered his intention—if he ever had it, in fact—of introducing this personage here.

The greatest number of MSS.[3] read the "*squyere*" instead of "*sompnour*"; but this is decidedly wrong, for it would be extremely rude for a young fellow like the squire to interrupt the worthy parson in so ill-bred a manner, and highly unnatural for him to swear by his father's soul[4] (l. 1178) in the presence of his parent. Other MSS. again, among them the Ellesmere, omit this interlude entirely, and only one, Arch. Seld. B. 14, and this not even one of the best, makes the 'Shipman' the interlocutor. Though Dr. Furnivall[5] places perhaps

[1] ten Brink, *l. c.* II, 165 *seq.*

[2] Harl. 7334, Rawlinson Misc. 1133, Royal 17 D. xv.

[3] Corpus, Sloane 1685 and 1686, Barlow, Lansdowne 851, Royal 8 C. II., Harl. 1758 and 7333, Cambr. Univ. Mm. and Ii., Lichfield, Laud, Hatton, Helmingham, Trinity Coll. Camb. R. 3. 3. and 3. 15, Rawlinson Poet. 141 and 149.

[4] Arch. Seld. has, *bi godis soule*.

[5] Temp. Pref., p. 21.

too much confidence in the authority of this MS., there are other circumstances which make it likely that the 'Shipman's Prologue and Tale' were meant to follow, if not immediately, at any rate soon after the 'Man of Law's Tale.'

Firstly, this view can be corroborated by the fact that the 'Shipman's Tale' is the only funny one left to us without connection with a foregoing one, and there can be no doubt that the poet meant a merry story to follow here (see l. 1185: *My joly body schal a tale telle*, etc.). Further, if we put the 'Shipman' in this place, a whole group of Tales, "inseparably" linked together, must stand here also. These are the 'Prioress's,' Chaucer's 'Sir Thopas' and 'Melibe,' the 'Monk's,' and the 'Nun's Priest's';[1] and judging from the End-link[2] of the last-named, still another Tale was to succeed—but which is quite uncertain. Now, as mine host mentions Rochester, thirty miles from London, in the 'Monk's Prologue' (l. 3116) as being near, it is evident that this group of Tales must be placed before the others in which places further off from London on the way to Canterbury are alluded to, viz., the group 'Wife of Bath,' 'Friar,' 'Sompnour' (with its mention of Sittingbourne); then the 'Second Nun Canon's Yeoman' group and the 'Manciple's Prologue and Tale' (where Blean Forest is spoken of). But whether Chaucer intended to make Rochester the pilgrims' first station and resting-place for the night cannot be decided; yet it seems very probable, as a thirty miles' journey would be quite sufficient for one day, considering the badness of the roads, and the slow way of travelling of our party.

Finally, some one may object that if the 'Man of Law's' story is told by ten o'clock, say half-way between Deptford and Dartford, six more Tales would hardly bring the pilgrims so far as Rochester, about double the distance. Though I do not consider such an

[1] See Temporary Preface, p. 22. [2] See Group B., l. 1652.

argument—with regard to the imperfect state of the 'Canterbury Tales'—a very strong one, I would suggest that Chaucer had planned to insert one or two more Tales before the Man of Law's, or rather between this one and the Shipman's, perhaps the Doctor's and the Pardoner's, which, though closely connected with each other, stand in no relation to the remainder. In this case the Landlord's remark in the (supposed) Shipman's Head-link, about the "*lered men in lore*,"[1] would receive a stronger foundation, as not only referring to the Man of Law, and perhaps to the Parson, but at the same time to the Doctor and Pardoner, of whom the latter, though not highly educated in fact, might, from his Latin quotations, have appeared so to the unlettered host. And here the Pardoner's wish to have some sort of lunch or breakfast before beginning would suit the presumed time of the day very well, it being before or, alternatively, soon after ten o'clock a.m. But although these suggestions cannot be strictly proved, they may serve to show that no particular objection can be raised against the assumption that Rochester was the pilgrims' first stoppage on their way.[2]

[1] Temp. Pref., p. 22.

[2] Dr. Koch's scheme is my suggested but rejected one: "We can make a 2½ days' journey, by doing 30 miles the first day, sleeping at Rochester; and 16 miles the second, sleeping at Ospringe."—Temp. Pref., l. 39, 41. We both agree that Chaucer, on the last day of the Pilgrimage, makes the last 10 miles into Canterbury enough for the last day's travelling from the "morwe tyde" till "about five o'clock in the evening," and that he also makes 16 miles enough for the journey of the last day but one. We want evidence as to the first day's work. Having walkt the road, I don't think so much of the differences of surface as Dr. Koch does, or of his "3 points: (1) Chaucer expressly states that the Pilgrims start, on the first day, at early dawn, whilst there is no such statement for the following days. (2) Men and horses are fresh on the first day, and so are able to go a greater distance than after a longer journey. (3) The way beyond Rochester is hilly, sandy, and leads through woods infested by thieves. (See below, page 63)." But all is guess-work at present. Let us hope that some records of actual journeys by pilgrims will soon turn up. The only dates I've seen lately relate to Henry VIII. and to Anne of Cleves, and are noted on p. 79-80 below.—F. J. F.

§ 32. *The Third Group.*—But which Tale or group of Tales are we to put first after the stay at Rochester? Dr. Furnivall suggests the Doctor's and Pardoner's Tales,[1] because of the just-mentioned allusion to an early hour of the day contained in the connecting link between the two. With the same right, however, the group 'Squire-Franklin' might stand in this place, especially as from the Tale of the former (l. 73) we can learn that it was told at the early hour of "*prime.*" It may even be supposed that the Squire's and the Franklin's Tales were originally meant to precede the Doctor's and the Pardoner's, so that the Knight's son would open the second day, as his father did the first. Be this as it may, we are certainly entitled to place the tales of the 'Wife of Bath,' the 'Friar,' and the 'Sompnour' in the second day, as in the 'Wife's Prologue' (l. 877) we hear that the pilgrims are approaching Sittingbourne (forty miles from London),[2] and are quite close to this town by the end of the 'Sompnour's Tale.'

As the 'Clerk's' and 'Merchant's' Tales both refer to the 'Wife of Bath's,' and are inseparably linked—see especially l. 1224, "*Grisildes grete pacience*"—though unconnected with any other, we must put them, with Dr. Furnivall,[3] closely after the foregoing group, in spite of a different arrangement in a certain number of MSS. and old prints,[4] which make the Squire's Tale follow the Man of Law's, and connect the former with the Merchant's, by altering the real Franklin's Prologue to fit in here; whilst the Clerk's Tale in them is succeeded by the Franklin's, both forming one group linked together by some sort of amalgamation of the real Merchant's End-

[1] Temp. Pref. p. 25. [2] *Ib.* p. 24.

[3] *Ib.* p. 27. The Prologue which in some MSS. (see Six-Text Print I, Specimens, cols. 26-30) connects the Shipman's Tale with the Pardoner's is certainly spurious, its contents contradicting those of the conclusion of the Pardoner's real Tale.

[4] Cf. Dr. Furnivall's Trial Tables, etc., Six-Text Print I.

link and the real Squire's Head-link, with divers alterations and transformations.[1] For, in my opinion, it can be easily seen that Chaucer did not introduce these deviations from the better MSS. himself.

§ 33. *The Fourth and Fifth Groups.*—As for the 'Squire's Tale,' we have seen before that the poet cannot have meant it to succeed immediately the Man of Law's, nor is it credible that the variations in the Franklin's Head-link, introducing the Merchant in his stead, are Chaucer's own, as the whole passage is much more in the character of a farmer or husbandman than that of a trader; see *e.g.* l. 11—

"*I hadde leuer than twenty pound worth* lond," etc.,

besides the very poor rhyme (l. 27) *Marchaunt certeyn* (instead of *Frankeleyn*) : *disdeyn*.

In the same way the connection of the 'Clerk's Tale' (or the 'Merchant's,' respectively) with the 'Franklin's' appears very improbable; for, not to mention the suspicious variety of readings (see note 2), the change of *Squiere* into *Frankeleyn* (l. 1) makes the verse impossible.

"*Sire Fránkeléyn, cométh néré, if it your wille bé.*"
(Six accents instead of five!)

On the other hand, the real 'Merchant's Head-link' is so well joined with the 'Clerk's Envoy,' the opening

[1] Three MSS. (see Specimens, etc., Six-Text Print I, cols. 46-57) have the Merchant's End-link quite right, but join it with the real Squire's Head-link, inserting, however, "*frankeleyn*" instead of Squire, in its first line. One MS. connects the Clerk's Tale with the Merchant's End-link, but otherwise resembles the three mentioned before, and makes the Squire's Head-link follow it with the same alteration. Other MSS. have the same arrangement, but the whole is shortened, and the metre altered, being turned into a seven-line stanza, continuing thus the metre of the Clerk's Tale. But one of these stanzas is decidedly spurious, and the ryme—*gentleman : can : am* : cannot be Chaucer's. All these ascribe the Squire's Prologue in the same way to the Franklin. For other variations, see *l.c.*

line of the former being almost a literal repetition of the concluding line of the latter—see also above—that I have no doubt that all different arrangements must be rejected.

But though it seems quite certain that the Tales of the 'Clerk' and 'Merchant' form one group, and those of the 'Squire' and 'Franklin' another, the question still remains whether all four of them belong to one set, as Prof. ten Brink thinks,[1] or whether they are quite separate from each other, which is Dr. Furnivall's opinion.[2] Now, the Squire speaking of the early hour of "*pryme*" (l. 73), it is evident that Chaucer meant his Tale to be one of the earlier related in one day of the pilgrimage. But if the foregoing group is somehow connected with the 'Wife of Bath's Tale,' as shown before, and the wanderers meanwhile have passed Sittingbourne, the allusion to the "*pryme*" would appear rather out of place here. And as there is no sign of connection of the 'Squire-Franklin' group with any other, this set of Tales might be placed as well at the beginning of the second day—of which possibility we have treated above. Still, as there is not any particular evidence for this suggestion, we had perhaps better follow Dr. Furnivall, who puts this group at the beginning of the last day of the pilgrimage.

§ 34. *The Last Groups. Duration of the Pilgrimage.*— But that Chaucer really intended to represent a three days' journey (or, at least, one of more than two days) is, in my opinion, clearly seen from the 'Canon's Yeoman's Prologue,' which opens with—

(555-7) "*Whan ended was þe lif of seynt Cecile,*
Er we fully had ridden fyue mile,
At Boughton vnder blee vs gan ore-take
A man," etc.

and again—

(588-9) "*He seyde 'Sires, now in þe morwe tyde*
Out of your ostelry I sawgh you ryde," etc.

[1] Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, p. 171. [2] Temp. Preface, p. 29.

Adding to this the allusions in the Manciple's Headlink—

" . . . . *þer stont a litle toun*
which þat cleped is Bob-vp-and-down.
vnder þe Blee in Canterbury way" (ll. 1-3),

and— "*What eyleþ þe to slepe by þe morwe?*" (l. 16)—

it is evident that our poet makes his pilgrims start, in the morning, from a certain place about ten or twelve miles from Canterbury, which they reach about five o'clock in the evening (see the 'Parson's Prologue,' *l.c.*).

Now supposing that the whole tour was made in two days, it would be a very curious result to find that the pilgrims went only some ten miles on the second, and so must have completed about forty-six miles on the first. It is much more probable that Chaucer meant to introduce a division of this latter distance into two days; and though he does not expressly mention the places where he wanted his pilgrims to stay for the night, we cannot be far wrong in supposing that the first halt was made at Rochester, as already said before, and the second at Ospringe.

Still there remains a great inequality of distances done in each day, the party completing thirty miles on the first, sixteen on the second, and ten on the third. But this great difference can, in my opinion, be pretty well accounted for. For the road from Southwark to Rochester leads, as far as I can make out from maps and descriptions,[2] mostly across plains, only occasionally interrupted by hills. Besides, the wanderers have started quite fresh with sunrise, as we have seen before. But between Chatham and Sittingbourne, and especially behind the latter town, the hills become steeper, and the road worse and worse.[3] Then one ought to bear in

[1] See Temp. Preface, p. 41, where Dr. Furnivall admits the possibility of a two and a half (or three) days' journey.

[2] Cf. the pleasant little Pilgrimage to Canterbury, by J. and E. Pennell, London 1885.

[3] *l. c.*, p. 53. (Not so when I walkt it. — F.)

mind, that in the Middle Ages Blean Forest was a dangerous place and peopled with thieves and robbers,[1] so that travellers most likely had to make a great circuit to avoid these perils.

So, on the whole, I hope I have shown that the most satisfactory solution of the problem in question is, that *Chaucer intended to make his pilgrimage last three days, from the* 18*th of April to the* 20*th.*

§ 35. *The Astronomical Allusion in the Parson's Prologue.*—It is of importance to state the latter date, as on this entirely depends the explanation of the well-known passage in the beginning of the 'Parson's Prologue':—

"*By þat þe maunciple*[2] *had his tale endid*
The sonne fro þe south line is descendid
So lowe þat it nas nouȝt to my sight
Degrees nyne and twenty as in hight.
Four on þe clokke [*was it*][3] *as I gesse,*
For eleuen foote, or litil more or lesse, etc.
Ther-with þe mones exaltacioun
In mena libra alway gan ascende," etc.

For from this passage alone we can find the year in which the event took place.

About the first part of this description there can be no doubt, as it is certain that on the 20th of April (old style) the Sun is about twenty-nine degrees above the western horizon at four o'clock in the afternoon.[4] But so much greater is the difficulty of explaining ll. 10-11. For the Moon's exaltation is, strictly speaking, Taurus, which is just opposite Libra. There must be either a

[1] See Manciple's Head-link, l. 8.

[2] It is irrelevant for my purpose whether the Parson's Tale was really meant immediately to follow the Manciple's, or whether another name ought here to be substituted (see Temp. Pref., p. 36). Certain it is that the Parson's Story was to be the last on the way down (see l. 16 of the Parson's Prol.).

[3] Harl. 7334: *it was;* but by the above alteration we get a readable verse.

[4] Cf. Prof. Skeat's edition of the Astrolabe, p. lxiii, *seq.*

scribe's mistake in these words, or the term *exaltation* must be taken in another than its astrological sense (*i.e. that* degree of a sign in the zodiac in which a planet has its greatest power).

Mr. Brae suggests the following alteration in l. 11:—

"In Libra *men al awai* (=the Star Min al auwa) gan ascende,"

while Prof. Skeat proposes to read:—

"Therwith *Saturnes* exaltacioun,
I mene Libra, alway gan ascende."

Both these readings may, astronomically, give a better sense, but are, in my opinion, too bold to deserve further consideration. A little more plausible may be the following suggestion. The real text may have been

"Therwith *the boles*[1] exaltacioun," etc.

Now we may suppose that the poet offered for an explanation the marginal note "þe mone," and his copyist, thinking this term better applicable, put it into the text instead of "þe *boles*." But, if this alteration may be approved of from a philological point of view, it is technically not quite correct; for, if Taurus is the exaltation of the moon, the moon cannot be exactly called the exaltation of Taurus. Still, if we are allowed to ascribe a casual slip to Chaucer, this one would be more natural than writing "þe mones" for "Saturnes."

But, turning to the other solution of this riddle, the explanations of "exaltation" by "ascension," or "elevation," suggested by Tyrwhitt and supported by Hertzberg,[2] its meaning would be just the same as the one resulting from the above alteration, namely, that Chaucer intended to say that the moon was rising at four o'clock p.m. in the middle of Libra. And this may very well have been the case; for if the moon was then in Libra, she must have risen exactly when Aries

[1] *bole* for *Taurus* is used Mars, l. 86, and Troilus II. l. 55.
[2] See note on l. 17,321.

went down, and this took place when Taurus was about twenty-nine degrees above the horizon.

§ 36. *The Presumable Date of the Pilgrimage.*—Though this explanation gives no absolute certainty either—for in several other passages[1] Chaucer uses the word "exaltatioun" in its true astrological sense—I will take it as the most satisfactory, and start from it in my further deductions.[2]

Supposing that the moon rises at four o'clock p.m. on a day (the 20th of April old style) on which the sun sets about seven o'clock, she will be full moon in about three days, as she will rise an hour later every day. Now, according to Lehmann's *Mondtafeln* (Lunar Tables) there was a full moon on the following days of April in the years 1385-99 (the period during which the 'Canterbury Tales' must have been written):

Year	1385	1386	1387	1388	1389	1390	1391	1392
Day of April	23rd	12th	2nd	21st	11th	30th	19th	8th

Year	1393	1394	1395	1396	1397	1398	1399
Day of April	25th	13th	2nd	21st	10th	2nd	21st

Subtracting now the above number of three days from any of these dates, we shall find that only the year 1385 will answer our purpose. For if in this *year full moon was on the 23rd of April, she must have risen at four o'clock* p.m. *on the 20th—our exact date.*

If we remember, at the same time, that from internal reasons (see § 28) the period between 1385 and 1386 was the likeliest for Chaucer to have conceived the idea of writing his 'Canterbury Tales,' and to have commenced this work soon after, there can be very little doubt left that the pilgrimage in question *must*

[1] Wife of Bath's Preamble, l. 702; Merchant's Tale, l. 2224; Squire's Tale, l. 49.

[2] I owe the following calculations again to the kindness of Professor Thurein (see above, § 16 and § 20).

have taken place from the 18th to the 20th of April, 1385. And if, looking to the Issue Roll of this same year, we find that Chaucer was on the 24th of this month in London[1] to receive his and his wife's pensions, this date would serve more to corroborate than to invalidate our deductions. For it would be just on the day after his return that he went to fetch his money, maybe after having spent more than usual on his trip, as in other years he generally gets his payment quite late in April or in May.

Finally, we must take into consideration that the spring of 1385 was the first since his connection with the court and his appointments in which Chaucer was master of his time, having obtained leave to get a deputy for his office. Would it not be very natural that he, in the happy feeling of freedom, should have just then undertaken that popular pilgrimage to Canterbury?

§ 37. *The Presumable Dates of the Single Tales.*—But admitting all these conclusions, it does not of course follow that our poet immediately after his journey sat down to describe it poetically, and to arrange his stock of ready-made tales so as to fit the conversation of his travelling companions. On the contrary, I should imagine that, for some time, he went on, "as in private duty bound," with his 'Legende of Good Women,' all the while perhaps occupied in his mind with his new work, which, however, he may not have commenced till the end of the same year, or early in the next.[2]

We must not assume, however, that Chaucer now wrote all the 'Canterbury Tales' at a stretch, for in their fragmentary state they bear traces enough of repeated

[1] See Trial-Forewords, p. 25.

[2] 1386 is the year assigned to the Canterbury Tales by Dr. Furnivall, see Trial-Forewords, p. 16, and again pp. 97—98 (Hindwords).

interruptions. The first break occurs, as we have seen before, in the middle of the 'Cook's Tale,' but is apparently occasioned by the poet's own scruples about the fitness of the story in this place. So he may have taken up his work very soon with the 'Man of Law's Prologue,' with its allusions to the 'Legende of Good Women.' But then comes an entire change of tone. At the end of his Head-link, the Man of Law pretends that he is going to tell a plain tale in prose (see § 28, note), and we are astonished to find one of the most pathetic stories in verse, opening with a poem bitterly complaining of the sufferings of poverty.

This passage would be very well applicable to Chaucer's own state of life after he had lost his offices, towards the close of 1386. The sad events in the public affairs of England in the years following have been spoken of before, and to them may refer other portions of the 'Canterbury Tales,' to which Prof. ten Brink draws our attention.[1] For instance, one stanza in the 'Man of Law's Tale,' beginning—

> "*Haue ze not seye somtyme a pale face*
> *Among a prees,*" etc. (ll. 645-51).

The same may be said of the 'Doctor's Tale of Virginia'; see especially the concluding lines—

"*Bewar, for no man woot how God wol smyte,*" etc. (ll. 278-86);

and of the 'Clerk's Tale of Griseldis,' of which one stanza not to be found in the Latin original is particularly characteristic here—

"*O stormy people, vnsad and euer vntrewe,*" etc. (ll. 995—1001).

But, though composed in these years of distress (1387-89), or at least interwoven with reminiscences of them, these Tales (and perhaps a few others, as the 'Monk's' and Chaucer's own of 'Melibe') need not have

[1] Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, p. 162; pp. 125 and 127.

been ascribed at first to certain Tellers. It may not have been till the poet's circumstances began to brighten again, by his receiving a new appointment from the king (July 1389), that he resumed his 'Canterbury Tales' in the old spirit; and it is perhaps to this short period of prosperity (1389-91) that we owe some of the most finished parts of this collection—the Prologues of the 'Wife of Bath,' the 'Pardoner,' the 'Merchant's Tale,' etc.

How long Chaucer continued to work at this great poem cannot of course be exactly stated, but I should think that, with the loss of his second office, and the relapse into his former misery, he cannot have felt much inclination to occupy himself with merry adventures, funny tales, and humorous descriptions, his last being most likely the unfinished redaction of that prosy sermon known as the 'Parson's Tale.' In support of this view, see my former remarks (§ 2) on the poet's latest productions, to which I shall have to recur presently.

§ 38. *The 'Astrolabe.'*—If we now turn to the remainder of our author's writings, we had better begin with those whose date can be exactly fixed, or nearly so.

There is, first, Chaucer's more or less free translation of Messahalah's treatise on the 'Astrolabe,' done for his son Lewis, then a small boy at school in Oxford.[1] In the second part of his treatise, § 1, occurs the date of the 12th of March, chosen as an example, and the same again in § 3, in both places spoken of as if that day had already passed. So there is sufficient reason to believe that this translation was made in 1391. But we must not overlook the fact that at another place (p. 15) the date of "*the 13th day of decembre*" occurs, without the figure of the year, though. From the context, however, it appears that the same year is meant, and then this translation would at least partly belong to 1392.

[1] See the Preface in Prof. Skeat's Edition for the Chauc. Soc.

On the other hand, one must not draw the same conclusions on finding the years 1397 and 1400 mentioned in sections 44 and 45. For the better MSS. break off at § 40, or even earlier,[1] so that it is not at all certain that the following sections are genuine; and even admitting Prof. Skeat's reasons for their partly being so, the year 1397 is only given as a "rote" or epoch from which to reckon. It would certainly be erroneous to suppose that Chaucer continued his interrupted treatise on the 'Astrolabe' in 1397 or 1400; for, if begun in 1391 for his son when quite young, it would have been superfluous for him six years later. Chaucer probably never finished this work, like so many others; and I think Prof. Skeat is quite right in saying (*l. c.*, p. xix) that our poet "did sometimes actually tire of a thing which he had nearly completed, and allowed himself to begin something else for which he had meantime conceived a newer enthusiasm."

Whether this was actually the case with the work in question may perhaps be doubted; for it is not unlikely that the change in his circumstances happening towards the end of 1391 (see above) may have occasioned his breaking off in the middle of his translation.

§ 39. *Envoys to Skogan and Bukton, 'Venus,' 'Purse.'*— The piece next in date would be 'Lenvoy to Skogan,' if its mention of heavy rains in autumn (see "Michaelmas," l. 19) really alludes to the thunderstorms and abundant falls of water in September and October, which, according to Stowe's Annals, happened in 1393.[2] And, indeed, everything else in the poem is in favour of this date. Certainly it is a production of his old age, as he calls himself "*hore*" (l. 31) and "*old*" (l. 35), and was written at the time of distress, as, in its last stanza, the poet com-

[1] See Preface, pp. xvii—xxii.

[2] See Dr. Furnivall's note, Minor Poems, p. 419, and cf. ten Brink, *l. c.* pp. 202-3, and Skeat's Edit., p. 389.

plains of being forgotten "*in solitarie wildernesse*" (at Greenwich), asking his friend to remember him at court (at Windsor). It is not unlikely that the grant of £20 a year bestowed upon him by King Richard on the 28th of February, 1394, was due to Skogan's friendly interference.

But, at the same time, we learn from this poem that Chaucer, though not yet devoid of humour and wit, has given up rhyming and writing, for he says (ll. 36 *seqq.*) :—

> "*I mexcuse,*
> *God helpe me so, in no rym, douteles,*
> *Ne þynke I nevер of slep to wake my muse,*" etc.

If we compare with these expressions the 'Compleynte of Venus,' a translation from the French of Otes de Graunson, we shall find the same feelings of infirmity and displeasure[1] in poetical work described in its 'Envoy,' where the poet says :—

> "*For celde þat in my spiryt doulleþe me* (ll. 76—78)
> *Haþe of þendyting al þe subtylytee*
> *Welnieghe byrafft out of my remembraunce,*" etc.

Now the old copier, Shirley, in his Trin. Coll. MS., informs us that this piece was written as a sort of answer to the 'Compleynt of Mars,' and that its Venus was the same personage as the heroine of the latter, the Duchess Isabel of York. As this lady died in 1394, it seems probable enough that Chaucer made his englishing of Graunson's poem some time before, because after her death this piece would scarcely have been of much interest, and the poet would certainly have dropped a hint in his envoy that 'Venus' had passed from this world. This probability almost becomes a certainty, if the reading in the two MSS. written by Shirley—*princesse* (l. 73) instead of *princes* in the others—could be

[1] Compare with this the passage in the Dedication of Gower's Confessio Amantis, discussed before, p. 3.

proved to be genuine. But considering Chaucer's groan over his old age contained in the above quotation, we cannot put the poem much earlier, so that its date may be fixed between 1393 and 1394.[1]

The next date we can approximately fix is that of the 'Envoy to Bukton.' Certainly this humorous little piece was written after the death of Chaucer's wife (ab. 1387), as in ll. 7-8 he says :—

> "*I dar not writen of hyt* (*i.e* marriage) *noo wikkednesse,*
> *Leste y myself falle eft in swich dotage.*"

And as the poet recommends his friend Bukton to read the 'Wyfe of Bathe' in order to explain his opinion about wedded life, we must conclude that part of the 'Canterbury Tales' was finished also. For I still adhere to my opinion expressed in the Notes to my 'Critical Edition,' in spite of Prof. ten Brink's objections,[2] and take (l. 25) "*this lytel writte, prouerbes or figure*" as referring to the following proverbial sayings (ll. 27-28), and not to the 'Wyfe of Bathe' (l. 29), which latter allusion seems to me to express that this then already well-known piece would show the author's opinion on the subject in question better than a short ballad.[3] This would bring us to some time after 1390 or 1391, the date of this latter part of the 'Canterbury Tales' (see before). But there is a still closer mark of time to be found in the poem itself, see l. 23—

> ". . *the were lever to be take in ffrise,*" etc.,

which means that even the dreadful treatment of prisoners in Friesland would seem preferable to being

[1] See Dr. Furnivall's Parallel-Text of the Minor Poems, p. 411; ten Brink, *l. c.*, p. 200, and Skeat's Ed., pp. 394-95.

[2] See Literaturblatt f. germ. und rom. Philologie, 1883, cols. 425-6.

[3] Even allowing Prof. ten Brink's view to be the correcter one, it does not necessarily follow that the Wyfe of Bathe was only then just written; Chaucer may have sent his friend a copy of this Preamble composed some time before, together with his admonitory epistle.

married again. This allusion, if to be understood at all, can only refer to an event which had then recently happened, and, as Prof. Skeat[1] points out, this was most probably the expedition of William of Hainault to Friesland in 1396, in which a number of English warriors took part, some of whom had to endure all sorts of miseries, even death. So there is scarcely any doubt that this Envoy was written towards the end of that year, which is certainly too late to make Chaucer only then write the 'Wyfe of Bathe's' Preamble and Tale, still before the general plan of the 'Canterbury Tales,' as Prof. ten Brink suggests.[2]

The last poem, the date of which—or at any rate of its Envoy—can be settled with some certainty, is Chaucer's 'Compleint to his Empty Purse.' For this ballad is undoubtedly addressed to King Henry IV, the "*Conqueror of Brutes Albioun*," who by "*fre electioun*" had become the "*verrey king*" of England. He was received as king by the Parliament on the 30th of September, 1399, and as our poet was granted an addition of forty marks yearly to his former pension on the 3rd of October, this Envoy must have been written between these two dates.[3] The three stanzas forming the Complaint itself may have been composed some time before, as the poet's wish that his replenished purse may help him "*out of þis toune*" does not quite agree with his situation in the beginning of October 1399; and as the Envoy addressing the king is not to be found in all MSS., Prof. ten Brink suggests that the ballad was written shortly before the 4th of May, 1398, when Chaucer got from Richard II letters of protection against enemies suing him. Ten Brink finds an indication that the 'Compleint' was first

[1] Minor Poems, p. lxxix.

[2] *L. c.* and Gesch. d. engl. Lit., II, pp. 130 and 201.

[3] Cf. Trial-Forewords, p. 27; ten Brink, Literaturblatt (1883), cols. 426 and 427; Gesch. d. engl. Lit., II, pp. 212-13; Skeat's Minor Poems, pp. 396-7.

sent to this monarch in a note in MS. Harl. 7333, where the poem is called 'A supplicacion to Kyng Richard.' This latter supposition may be true, but is rather uncertain, of course.

§ 40. *'Fortune,' 'Former Age,' 'Stedfastnesse,' 'Gentilesse,' 'Truth.'*—We have now only to deal with a few of the Minor Poems, 'Fortune,' 'Former Age,' 'Stedfastnesse,' 'Gentilesse,' and 'Truth,' which, from their similarity of tone, and from being derived from the same source, Boethius,[1] may very well be supposed to belong to the same period. In them Chaucer complains of the wickedness of the world, the depravity of men, the inconstancy of friendship and fortune; he praises the olden times, admonishes men to strive after virtue, and to trust in a better life hereafter.

From these circumstances it may be concluded that these moral ballads were written when Chaucer was englishing 'Boece' (about 1380, see above), or soon after, especially as some of these pieces are inserted into one MS. of the latter.[2] But the internal evidence shows that they must be later; for, though influenced by the 'Consolation of Philosophy,' these poems are by no means literal translations of certain parts of that work, but rather free adaptations based upon personal experience, and intermingled with original ideas of the poet's. Now the first period of Richard II's reign, up to 1386, was, comparatively speaking, satisfactory to the adherents of the Crown, and Chaucer apparently led a contented though laborious life, enjoying the favour of the court, and the friendship of eminent men, such as the Duke of Lancaster, and Gower. So the pessimistic views expressed in those poems would have been quite out of place during this time.

[1] See my notes on this subject in A Critical Edition, etc., pp. 22—25, and Prof. Skeat's remarks in his Minor Poems, pp. 370—389.

[2] Cambr. Univ. MS. Ii. 321, Former Age and Fortune.

But when the Duke of Lancaster had left England for an adventurous expedition to Spain, and the Duke of Gloucester tried to usurp the government (from 1386-89), troubled times set in for the country, under which Chaucer had also to suffer severely, being turned out of his offices. After King Richard had assumed the reins of government himself, and John of Gaunt had returned to England, a happier state of public affairs, as well as of the poet's personal circumstances, seemed to have come, which, however, did not last long. As we have seen before, Chaucer lost his new appointment after two years, and the king began to estrange his old friends more and more through his despotism, especially after the year 1397, when he most cruelly persecuted his former opponents, and created great dissatisfaction among the nation by heavy taxes and other injustices.

In either of these two periods those five poems were most probably written; but the question is, Were they all written at the same time? and, If not, which came in the earlier, and which in the later? An answer is not easy to give, as there are no further hints indicating personages or events of which the exact dates can be fixed. In 'Fortune' certain lines (32, 40, 48) and the Envoy seem to contain some clue, indeed. But who is the "*beste frend*" still "*alive*"? who are the "*princes*" "*pre or tweyne*" that are requested to help the "*Pleintif*," or at least to beg his "*beste frende*" so to do? In my 'Ausgewählte Kleinere Dichtungen,' etc. (p. 48), and again in my 'Critical Edition' (p. 23), I suggested that John of Gaunt was this friend; and Prof. Skeat, in his 'Minor Poems' (p. 377), thinks this suggestion worth consideration. I still believe that there is some foundation for this supposition, since there can be no doubt that John of Gaunt proved a steady friend to the poet through all his life. Furthermore, 'Fortune's' consolation:

"*And ek þou hast þi beste frend alive,*"

seems to imply that this friend was absent, or not directly approachable, at the time when these lines were written. Now this, as shown before, was the case in the years 1386-89, when Chaucer appears to have been in great distress. But who, then, are the two or three princes to whom the poet applies for assistance? Perhaps the Duke of York, and Gaunt's son, Henry of Lancaster. Certainly not the Duke of Gloucester, through whom Chaucer very likely lost his offices. But, maybe, the Earl of Huntingdon, the supposed hero of the 'Mars,' may stand for the third; then taking "princes" in a more general meaning = noblemen.

On the other hand, Prof. Skeat also proposes to consider the king himself as "*the beste frend*" (*l. c.* p. 379), and that the princes addressed might be the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester (?). Or, I ask, was not perhaps Queen Ann, the Alcestis of the 'Legende of Good Women,' this personage? All these interpretations are possible, for "*alive*" then might allude to the circumstance that the poet was, at the time, neglected or banished from court. If his wish to attain to "*a better estate*" (l. 79) was after this fulfilled, only his appointment as Clerk of the King's Works can be meant, and this he received on the 12th of July, 1389.[1]

Another of the poems in question, 'Lack of Stedfastnesse,' has also an Envoy, addressed to the king, in which Chaucer warmly exhorts his sovereign to govern righteously and to show steadiness in his principles. Dr. Furnivall[2] ascribes this ballad to the year 1397; Prof. ten Brink[3] to the beginning of 1398; Prof. Skeat dates it between 1393 and 1399,[4] and, indeed, its contents

[1] Prof. ten Brink, Gesch. d. Engl. Lit. II, p. 201, places it after 1391, perhaps rightly, but without adducing any decisive reasons.

[2] Trial-Forewords, p. 27; in the Parallel-Texts, p. 433, he puts it between 1397 and 1399.

[3] *L. c.* II, p. 205.

[4] Minor Poems, p. lxxvii.

would be better applicable to this latter period[1] than to the time between 1386 and 1389, when the Duke of Gloucester was chiefly responsible for the misgovernment.

Of 'Truth' Shirley tells us[2] that Chaucer made it "*on his deeth bedde*," and Prof. ten Brink[3] is inclined to believe him, whilst other critics doubt the correctness of this statement;[4] and Dr. Furnivall[5] thinks this poem much too good to have been written in the dullness of the poet's old age: he dates it about 1386. I can find nothing in the poem that would serve as proof of Shirley's information; on the contrary, the good counsel conveyed by it is not at all in the tone of a sick man feeling the end of his life approaching, but much rather gives one the impression of the advice of a man who is trying to console himself for the injustice of the world he has lately experienced. Whether 'Truth' was written after Chaucer's first misfortune, or belongs to the later period of distress, cannot, in my opinion, be decided with any certainty.

There is little to be said about the 'Former Age' and 'Gentilesse,' which may have been composed either when the country sighed under the tyranny of Gloucester, or when the king himself had begun his despotic rule.

Perhaps we are right in surmising that Chaucer, in the former period, used some of the 'Canterbury Tales' to vent his feelings about tyrannical misrule, public wrongs, and private sufferings (see § 37); while, during the latter period, he again took refuge in Boethius, and found consolation in turning some of his metres into

[1] Shirley's note in his Trin. Coll. MS. R. 3-20—"Balade Ppyal made by oure laureal poete of Albyon in hees laste yeeres."

[2] Same MS. [3] *L. c.* p. 213.

[4] See Prof. Skeat, *l. c.* p. lxxiv; and my Critical Edition, etc., p. 24.

[5] See Parallel-Text, p. 407, and cf. Trial-Forewords, p. 25.

English verse. Then 'Truth,' the 'Former Age,' 'Gentilesse,' and 'Stedfastnesse,' and perhaps also 'Fortune,' would belong to the time between 1393 and 1399, about —at any rate I am not aware that any particular objection can be raised against this latter date.

§ 41. *Proverbs (?). Conclusion.*—Finally, as for the 'Proverbs' ascribed in two MSS. to Chaucer, I am not convinced of their genuineness. For, firstly, their tone sounds too popular, and Chaucer does not write for the "million," he is essentially the poet for the cultivated classes and for the court. Secondly, one ought to observe the rhyme *compas : embrace*,[1] which is decidedly *not* Chaucerian. The quotation in Melibeus [2] can only prove that our poet knew this proverb—by the bye, apparently a translation from the French—not that he put it into rhyme.

So far the Chronology of Chaucer's writings. Some points I believe are pretty well settled, others are doubtful and uncertain, and will remain so until new allusions and fresh documents are discovered. But, on the whole, I hope to have given sufficient foundation to the dates affixed to the poet's works by me.

TABLE SHOWING THE SUPPOSED CHRONOLOGY OF CHAUCER'S WRITINGS.

First Period (French Influence).

1366 } 1367 } ? 'Romaunt of the Rose.'
1368 ? 'A B C.' ? 'Mandeleyne.'
1369 } 1370 } 'Deeth of Blaunche.'
1371
1372

Second Period (Italian Influence).

1375 } 1374 } ? 'Amorous Complaints.' 'Pité.' 'St. Cecily.' ? 'Wreched Engendryng,' etc.

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[1] See my note, Engl. Stud. XV, p. 418.
[2] Prof. Skeat's Minor Poems, p. 398. Trial-Forewords, p. 17.

1375 / 1376	? 'Palamon and Arcitas.'	
1377 / 1378	? 'Boece' begun.	(Astronomical, Latin, Italian Studies?)
1379	'Mars.'	

Third Period (Central).

1380 / 1381	'Troilus.' 'Boece' finished. 'Adam Scriveyn.	? 'Merciless Beauté.' ? 'Newfangelnesse.' ? 'Rosamounde.'
1382	'Parlament of Foules.'	
1383 / 1384	'Hous of Fame.'	? 'Anelida and Arcite.'
1385	'Legende of Good Women.'	? Prologue, Knight's, Miller's, Reeve's, Cook's [?] Tales, Man of Law's Prol. ?
1386 / 1387		? Man of Law's, Doctor's, Clerk's, Monk's Tales, Tale of Melibe.
1388	'Canterbury Tales.'	[? 'Fortune,' etc.]
1389 / 1390		? Wife of Bathe's, Sompnour's, Pardoner's, Shipman's, Merchant's Tales, etc. ?

Fourth Period (Decline).

1391 / 1392	'Astrolabe.'	? Parson's Tale.
1393	'Envoy to Skogan.'	
1394	'Venus.'?	
1395		? 'Fortune.'
1396	'Envoy to Bukton.'	? 'Former Age.' ? 'Gentilesse.'
1397		? 'Stedfastnesse.'
1398		? 'Truth.'
1399		
1400	'Purse' (Envoy).	

NOTE.

NOTE TO p. 59.—*Length and Stages of the Journey to Canterbury.* Halle, in his *Chronicle*, gives notes of two journeys of 3 days or more from Canterbury to Greenwich, when the roads must have been much better, 137 and 154 years after Chaucer's pilgrimage: 1. of Henry VIII and the Emperor Charles V of Germany. Having slept at Canterbury, "The morowe after, these princes remoued to Sityngborne [15½ miles], and the next day to Rochester [10½ miles], . . and on Mondaie thei came to Grauesende by one of the Clocke, where they toke their Barges, and there wer thirty Barges appoynted for the straungiers; and so by .vi. of the clocke

they landed at Grenewiche [5 miles E. of London], the same Monday the .ii. day of Iune [1522]."—p. 635, ed. 1809.

2. of Anne of Cleves, on her way to marry Henry VIII. She landed at Deal on Saturday, Dec. 27, 1539, slept at Dover that night and Sunday, and on Monday, Dec. 29, came "to s. Austens without Caunterbury, where she lay that nyght: and on the next day [Tuesday, Dec. 30] she came to Syttyngburne [15½ miles], and there lodged that nyght [Dec. 30, 1539]. And as she passed toward Rochester on Newyeres euen [Wednesday, Dec. 31], on Raynam down [5½ miles] met her the duke of Norffolke and the lord Dacre of the South . . . which brought her to Rochester [5 miles], where she lay in the Palace all Newyeres day [Thursday, Jan. 1, 1540, where Hen. VIII met her] . . . & the next day [Friday, Jan. 2] he departed to Grenewich, and she came to Dartford [14 miles]. On the morow, being the third day of Ianuary, and saturday," she came to Blackheath, and thence the King conducted her thro' Greenwich Park, to the Palace, where he married her on Jan. 6, and then brought her by water to Westminster on Feb. 4. On June 25, 1540, Henry sent her off to Richmond "for her health, open ayre and pleasure," and on July 6 divorst her.—Halle, p. 833-9. F. J. F.

APPENDIX.

Prof. B. ten Brink's Latest Views on the Chronology of Chaucer's Writings.

After the above Essay was finished and had gone to press, a short paper, 'Zur Chronologie von Chaucer's Schriften,' by the late Prof. ten Brink, was published posthumously in 'Englische Studien,' vol. xvii. pp. 1—26. As the Professor's views, even if they turn out erroneous, deserve the attention of all Chaucerians, I think it best to discuss shortly here the contents of this article, as in some parts it deviates from the ideas generally held about the dates of Chaucer's writings.

The first section of ten Brink's essay treats of the 'Life of St. Cecily' and the 'Troilus,' with reference to an article of Dr. E. Koeppel, printed in 'Anglia' (N. F., II., pp. 228 *seqq.*), which tried to show that 'Cecily' was written after the 'Troilus.' But as the Professor's refutation of this suggestion comes to the same results as my own chronology is based upon, I need not enter into any details here.

Ten Brink's second section, however, requires a closer examination. Here the Professor believes he has proved (1) that the version of the Prologue to the 'Legende of Good Women,' contained in the Cambridge MS. Gg. 4. 27, was written several years later than the cast of all the other MSS.,[1] and (2) that Chaucer's last translation of Innocent's Treatise 'Of the wrechede engen

[1] Impossible surely.—F. J. F.

drynge of mankynde,' or 'De contemptu mundi,' is one of his later works, and was probably done in 1387-8.

As for ten Brink's arguments, I don't think them very convincing ones.

(1) He refers his readers to two passages in the Gg. cast (ll. 261-2 and 314-5), in which the poet seems to speak of himself as of an old man. But, in my opinion, those lines are not at all conclusive; for, in the first place, the Gg. MS. is by no means a trustworthy one; it has a good many acceptable readings indeed, but on the other hand it often enough spoils the sense and the metre entirely, see, *e. g.*, 'Legende,' lines 650, 718, 756, 840, 1729-30, etc., 'Parl.,' ll. 110, 256, 393, 560 *seqq.* (*he, him*, for *she, hir*), 611, etc.[1] So it is very doubtful whether its alteration of

"*As other wrecches han doon many a day*" (l. 315)

into—

"*As other olde folys manye a day,*"

was introduced by Chaucer himself with a view to represent himself as an old fellow. And in ll. 261-2,

"*thow begynnyst dote*
As olde folis," etc.

we have evidently only a comparison of the actions, not of the persons. And even if persons are meant, a man nearer fifty than forty may very well call himself old in love affairs. And lastly, it would be rather funny if a poet, revising a work written a few years before, should alter allusions to his own person merely because he has grown older since the date of the composition, quite forgetting that the situation of the poem remained the same.

(2) Prof. ten Brink thinks that the long passage only found in the Gg. version, ll. 267—312, must have been

[1] Cf. also Prof. Skeat's remark in the Preface to his edition of the Legend, p. x, on the badness of this MS.

added at a later period, as the mentioning of "*Jerome agayns Jovinian*" (l. 281) points to the time when Chaucer was writing the 'Wife of Bath's Prologue' and the 'Frankeleyn's Tale,' in which he has made ample use of that treatise. But as Prof. Skeat rightly remarks ('Leg.,' p. xi), "it is not at all clear why the God of Love is here represented as appealing to books *against* women." It is quite a different thing with the quotation of Jerome, Valerius (l. 280), and others in the 'Canterbury Tales,' where these writers are justly cited as authorities against marriage (in the 'Wife of Bath's Prol.'), or as giving examples of virgins that would rather die than lose their "*maydenhede*" ('Franklin's Tale,' ll. 1364 *sqq.*).

Perhaps Chaucer's later discovery of this misquotation may have been one reason for suppressing this passage afterwards. Another may be found in the poet's own words, when he makes the God of Love give him his orders as to how he (the poet) is to write his 'Legende'—

> "I wot well that thou mayst nat al hit ryme,
> That swiche louers diden in hir tyme;
> It were to long to reden and to here," etc. (ll. 570—576),

which evidently means that King Richard wished Chaucer to shorten all lengthy descriptions, and to avoid all unnecessary quotations.

(3) In the ballade, beginning "*Hyde Absalon*," etc. (ll. 249 69), the burden of the Gg. version runs—

> "*Alceste is here that al that may destene*,"

while the other MSS. begin this line with—

> "*My lady comith that al this may destene*,"

not introducing her name before l. 432. According to them the God of Love afterwards (ll. 537 *seqq.*) scolds the poet for not having given her name in that balade. From these circumstances Prof. ten Brink concludes

that this general cast of the balade (which he calls the "vulgata") was the original one (p. 17).

But the case is, in fact, quite different, for in the Gg. version the poet introduces the name of Alceste as early as l. 179, when he sees her for the first time in his dream, which passage is suppressed in the "vulgata." So, of course, he was obliged to use her name in the burden of his balade, and this for another reason too; for in the Gg. version he makes the companions of the lady sing this ditty, whilst in all the other MSS. he sings it himself, pretending not to know her by name. In another passage, however (ll. 510 *seqq.*, Gg. 498 *seqq.*), both versions make the poet—after being informed by Love of the identity of his lady with the virtuous queen of Thrace—exclaim, as if quite astonished—

"*Now knowe I hir, and is this good Alceste?*"

This statement is quite absurd in Gg., because in it the poet does not for a moment pretend to be in doubt who Love's companion is. This evident contradiction[1] he must have noticed when writing his second version; and he now found himself obliged either to omit this latter passage, or to alter the former. He chose the last-named alternative, and later on (ll. 537 *seqq.*) added Love's reproach, for his (the poet's) presumed neglect in not having mentioned Alcestis in his balade. This (in my opinion) leaves scarcely any doubt that the "vulgata" was the revised edition.

As his next (4th) argument Prof. ten Brink adduces lines 552—565 of the "vulgata," which are wanting in MS. Gg. In them the God of Love admonishes the poet to write, besides the 'Legend of Alcestis,' those of the other women mentioned in his balade, reminding him at

[1] Prof. Skeat (Preface to his Edition, p. xvi) draws our attention to another oversight of the poet, who apparently forgets that Alcestis has already told her name before, l. 432, Gg. 422.

the same time that they are not the only faithful ones, but that there are 20,000 more with them, whose lives Chaucer may also write if he likes. These lines, the Professor argues, were left out when our poet was re-writing his 'Prologue,' as he had then altered his original plan. For the legends of some of the ladies mentioned in the Balade were never versified by Chaucer; at least, they have not come down to us; instead of which, others (Medea and Philomele) not enumerated in the Balade have been introduced. All this is quite true, but can only serve to show that the addition of those lines became necessary in the revised edition, when Chaucer had seen that he could not stick to his original list, and wished to secure for himself a greater freedom in his selection of virtuous women, or to apologize for having already deviated from his former project.

In his last (5th) section Prof. ten Brink tries to find out why and when Chaucer wrote the Gg. version of his 'Legende.' He thinks that the revised edition was not undertaken till several years after the first (about 1393), when the author felt inclined to resume his interrupted work; but as his relations to the Court had been loosened meanwhile, he suppressed all the passages expressing too much gratitude and veneration for the queen. Certain it is (see before, § 27), that after 1391 Chaucer's connection with his royal patrons was not so intimate as before; but even during this period of neglect he is apparently exerting himself to regain his former position at Court,—see especially his 'Envoy to Scogan' (§ 39), written about the same time as Prof. ten Brink wants to put the Gg. version of the 'Prologue' in. It would not only have been very foolish of Chaucer to have shown that he did not rate favour at Court so high as before; it would have been an act of meanness of which there is no other reason to believe him capable, viz. "to strike out part of his expressions of gratitude

on his seeing that his benefactors were not ind[ined] to continue their former kindness towards him."

If, besides these objections, we take into consid[eration] the reasons for the priority of the Gg. version [given] by Prof. Skeat in the Preface to his edition [of] 'Legende' (pp. xiii—xvii), — which Prof. ten [Brink] treats too superficially (see his note on p. 12). — [we find] that all the arguments of the latter crumble to [dust], and one is astonished to find so much ingenuity [wasted] to so futile an attempt. But the Professor's chief [object] is apparently quite another, viz., to show that Chaucer's Englishing of Innocent's treatise, 'De Contemptu Mundi,' was not done till after he wrote the "vulgata" version of the Prologue to the 'Legende,' but before he revised it in his Gg. cast, where we find the only mention of this work in ll. 114-15 (see p. 11 above). But this is the only passage that could induce us to place the Gg. version after the general one, all other deviations of the two redactions from each other speaking in favour of the reverse date; and these two lines do not appear to me of such weight as to counterbalance all the other evidence. As I said before (p. 29), it may have been a mere accident that Chaucer or his scribe omitted the reference to a former work of his. The dropping of two lines rhyming together, and of no great importance for the context, may easily occur in a position where a good many other passages were struck out and others newly added. Or Chaucer may not have thought it worth while to mention again an apparently unfinished work of his, whose contents had no special bearing upon the theme he was treating of. That he did not intend to give here a complete list of his own writings is shown by his omission of several poems undoubtedly composed before the 'Legend,' as the 'Troilus' and the 'Mars.'

Lastly, it must appear very curious that Chaucer

should have been induced to add just this translation to the number of his productions, and not have mentioned some of his (later ?) Canterbury Tales treating of faithful women, as 'Griseldis' and 'Constance,' which even ten Brink (see § 28) allows to have been written before 1393, his earliest date of the Gg. version of the 'Prologue.' For these reasons, I do not see any necessity to alter my dates given above.

NOTES BY PROF. SKEAT.

p. 10, l. 505. I give up this. *Dieu li garisse!* in the French should be translated "God it kepe and *were*." This was altered by the scribe, to avoid repetition of *were*. But Chaucer does use such repetitions. [This alteration is very ingenious, but cannot be proved to be the genuine reading; besides, notice the similar rhymes quoted on p. 11, ll. 3—5. —J. K.]

p. 11, l. 7. Never mind proper names. Chaucer also has Macrobie ('Parl. Fowles').

l. 2287, haye = may, *not in* Fr. A. [But *gay : haye* is, which points to both fragments having been done by the same author.—J. K.]

l. 602. *Alexandryn* is right; it is an adjective. Omit *of*.

p. 21. Certainly, the Complaint to his Lady is genuine. Please compare:

(*a*) quia vel aberat, quod abesse non velles, vel aderat, quod adesse voluisses. 'Boethius,' lib. iii. pr. 8.

(*b*) See note to 'Parl. Foul.,' 90.

Prof. Lounsbury accepts 'An Amorous Compleint' as genuine.[1] As to the 'Balade of Compleint,' I chiefly introduce it as a specimen of *a complaint*. We have none too many, yet Chaucer says he wrote many. I do not care to call it genuine. It illustrates.

p. 28, bottom. I think Prof. Lounsbury pointed out the stanzas from 'De Miseria' in the 'Man of Lawes Tale' long before Dr. Koeppel did. I fully believe (as you say) that it goes with St. Cecily.

p. 29. Certainly, I put A B C very early.

[1] Let us be merciful and forgive him this and other sins against Chaucer.—F. J. F.

p. 41. There is absolutely no Link between 'Troilus' and 'Rosemounde.' The MS. is about 1470, and proves nothing. To my mind, 'Rosemounde' is much later than 'Troilus.' It is more in the style of Envoy to Bukton. So also 'Merciles Beaute' and 'Newefangelnesse' all easily tossed off by a practised hand. *N. B.*—You can see the MS. for yourself in my 'Twelve Facsimiles of O. E. MSS.,' just published by the Clarendon Press. [I cannot fancy a man of nearly 60, living in distressed circumstances, and in "solitary wildernesse," writing these love-ditties.—J. K.]

p. 43, last line. I merely question the literal exactness of Lydgate's statement. I admit that it was practically due to the queen that Chaucer wrote the Legend. Your note implies that I could not see that the queen had any influence on the poem. Of course she had.

p. 65. This is the only point which I really think you should reconsider. The *But* cannot possibly have an exaltation! It's like talking of the angles of a circle; a circle has no angles. Nothing but a planet can have an exaltation. No reading is possible except: (1) the mones, (2) Mercuries, (3) dame Venus, (4) the sonne, (5) lord Martes, (6) lord Ioves, (7) Saturnes. It must be one of these seven. Note how badly all fit except (1) the mones, (7) Saturnes.

Chaucer may easily have made a mistake. The first 10 degrees of Libra are *the face of* the moon: if he looked it out, and looked under *Face* instead of *Exaltation*, he went wrong. How easy the error! If he trusted to memory, what is easier? The whole system is purely empirical. The reading *mena* simply arose from anticipating the *a* in *Libra*. Next, *In* for *I* crept in. [I must leave the decision of this point to students better up in astronomy or astrology than I am.—J. K.]

p. 79. Surely 'St. Cecily' is not the "acle" Canterbury Tale of early date. The 'Man of Lawe,' the 'Monk,' the 'Prioress,' the 'Clerk,' 'Sir Topas,' are all early tales, refurbished and re-written. I am also now clear that the same is true of 'Melibeus' and the 'Persones Tale.' This accounts (1) for putting bits of the 'Wretched Engendring' into the 'Man of Lawe'; (2) for additions to the 'Clerkes Tale,' in a far superior style (ll. 995–1008, 1177–1212); (3) for the "modern instances" in the 'Monk'; (4) for the jests against 'Sir Topas'; (5) for the retractation in the 'Persones Tale,' etc. 'Melibeus' may very well be one of your "Studies" in 1377-8. [Why does not Chaucer mention any of them in his Prologue to the 'Legende of Good Women'?—J. K.]

P.S. *Notes and Queries*, 8th series, vol. 1, June 25th, 1892, p. 522-3, adds these journeys and dates:—

'In 1305 Queen Margaret made a pilgrimage to Canterbury. She was at Dartford on April 27 [? slept there], at Rochester the same day, and apparently at Canterbury on the 30th. By May 2 she had reached Feversham on the return journey (Wardrobe Account, 14/62, Q. R.).

'In 1317 the Princess Mary and other ladies were at Dartford on May 15, Rochester and Newenton on the 17th, Ospring on the 18th. The day of their arrival at Canterbury is not given. The caravan was no small one, as supplies of hay were required for seventy-three horses (*Ibid.*, 31/10, Q.R.).

'In 1357 Queen Isabelle (the "she-wolf of France") was in London on June 5, at Dartford on the 7th, Rochester on the 8th, Ospring on the 9th, and Canterbury on the 10th. She dined at Rochester and Ospring, and supped at Canterbury. In returning, she dined at Canterbury on the 11th, [and] at Ospring on the 12th: she seems to have stayed at Ledes Castle until the 25th, when we find her at Sutton Park: after this her movements were variable (Cott. MS. Galba, E. xiv).

'From this evidence I gather that the usual stages were Dartford, Rochester, Ospring, or Feversham, Canterbury. Ospring, the Archbishop's palace, may have been the usual resting-place for royal pilgrims, and Feversham for commoners; but from Rochester to Feversham must have been the longest stage of the journey. HERMENTRUDE.'

'In July, 1403, Philippa, the youngest daughter of Henry IV., accompanied by her step-mother, Queen Joan, visited the shrine at Canterbury. The account of Thomas More, Keeper of the King's Wardrobe (Q. R. Wardrobe, 68/4), records payments at Dartford, Shiningwell (probably Shinglewell, near Ifield), Newenton (*i.e.* Newington), Sittingbourne, and Boughton. I have no note as to Rochester; but if it be inserted as the third halting-place, we shall probably have a complete set of easy stages for a seven days' land-journey from London to Canterbury in the beginning of the fifteenth century. J. HAMILTON WYLIE. Rochdale.'

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